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American education has always considered the non-standard or sub-standard form of speech used by children to be an imperfect copy of standard English. The defects of this approach have now become a matter of urgent concern in the face of the tremendous educational problems of the urban ghettos. This paper reverses the usual focus and looks directly at non-standard English--not as an isolated object in itself, but as an integral part of the larger sociolinguistic structure of the English language. To do this, the author first presents some linguistic considerations on the nature of language itself, and then a number of sociolinguistic principles which have emerged in the research of the past ten years. The relation of non-standard dialects to education is reviewed, bearing in mind that the fundamental role of the school is to teach the reading and writing of standard English. Finally, the author turns to the question of what research teachers and educators themselves can do in the classroom--the kind of immediate and applied research which will help them make the best use of teaching materials. The author hopes that this paper will put the teacher directly into touch with the students' language, help him to observe that language more directly and accurately, and enable him to adjust his own teaching to the actual problems that he sees. A 36-item bibliography covering all areas of the paper is included. (DO)

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A STUDY OF NON-STANDARD ENGLISH

by WILLIAM LABOV

AL 001 633

Foreword

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A. Hood Roberts, Director
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THE STUDY OF NON-STANDARD ENGLISH

by William Labov

American education has always been concerned with non-standard English, but primarily in a negative way. It has been the object to be overcome, rather than something to be studied and understood in its own right. The traditional view is that the non-standard or sub-standard form of speech used by children is an imperfect copy of standard English, marred by a number of careless and ignorant errors. Dialectologists have been arguing against this view for many years, but current textbooks and the approach of most educational research show that the underlying assumptions about non-standard English remain unchanged. Whatever justification this approach may have had in the past, its defects have now become a matter of urgent concern in the face of the tremendous educational problems of the urban ghettos--in particular the failure of our schools to teach Negro and Puerto Rican youth the fundamental skills of reading and writing. In the following pages we will reverse the usual focus, and look directly at non-standard English--not as an isolated object in itself, but as an integral part of the larger sociolinguistic structure of the English language. To do this, we will have to present first some linguistic considerations on the nature of language itself, and then a number of sociolinguistic principles which have emerged in the research of the past ten years. The relation of non-standard dialects to education will then be reviewed, bearing in mind that the fundamental role of the school is to teach the reading and writing of standard English. Finally, we will turn to the question of what research teachers and educators themselves can do in the schoolroom--the kind of immediate and applied research which will help him make the best use of his teaching materials. This is in a sense the most important contribution which this study hopes to make, for one of the major problems in education today is the teacher's ignorance of the student's language as well as the student's ignorance of the teacher's language. It is to be hoped that the material in these pages will put the teacher directly into touch with the student's language, help him observe that language more directly and accurately, and enable him to adjust his own teaching to the actual problems that he sees.

1. English in the American Schoolroom

When we compare American schools to their French, German, Spanish or Russian counterparts, we find that we are relatively free in our approach to language. Proposals for an Academy to legislate correct English have been made over and over again, and defeated every time. Yet we have not lacked for authority in the classroom. The dictionary, the spelling book, and the school grammar have traditionally been regarded as absolute authorities, far outweighing the teacher himself. The authoritarian position of the spelling book reflects, as we shall see, a real uniformity in American attitudes towards language. Almost all Americans recognize an external standard of correct English--that is, a standard which is something other than the way they speak themselves. The "doctrine of correctness" first began to dominate English speakers in the 17th and 18th centuries, when large numbers of middle class rose into the high positions previously dominated by the landed aristocracy, and this doctrine has remained strongly entrenched ever since. The great uniformity of American attitudes towards English is also reflected in our attitudes towards the native languages of immigrant groups. The native language of the immigrant first generation has been allowed to disappear in remarkable regularity in the second and third generation with very few expressions of regret, as part of the general pattern of assimilation of these ethnic groups into American society.

To most Americans, it does not seem unusual that English should replace the native language of immigrants in the first few years of school, since it has been assumed that everyone learns the English language in school. Whatever equipment the child brings to school has hardly been considered the language itself, but rather a very imperfect approximation to it. As a result, those who have not had much schooling (and many who have had) form a very low opinion of their own linguistic competence. To the question, "What do you think of your own speech?" we often obtain answers such as "Terrible," "Horrible," "Awfully sloppy," or "Not too good." Some rural and a few urban dialects have retained a certain amount of prestige, but most rural speakers are made to feel painfully aware of their inadequacy in school. Such urban dialects as the every-day vernacular of New York, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, or Chicago are ranked very low in the social scale, and the speakers quickly learn to prefer (consciously) the more standard forms which teachers hold up as a model.

This modeling is in fact all of the teaching method and philosophy that has been required in school. It is assumed that the teacher speaks the standard English of the textbook; that the students should all acquire this standard; and that it is sufficient for the teacher to correct any departures from the model as they occur. "Do it as I do it" is the basic instruction. Little attention is given to the question of why the student makes a particular departure from standard English, anymore than one asks why a student adds four and five to get eight--it is assumed that he has not learned that particular sum yet. Whether or not this method of modeling has in general succeeded is not the issue here. In cold fact, the number of differences between most non-standard dialects (especially those of middle class speakers) and standard English are relatively few. In one way or another, most students have gradually learned to imitate the teacher's style, more or less. More importantly, their dialects have not apparently interfered with the teaching of reading and writing to any serious degree.

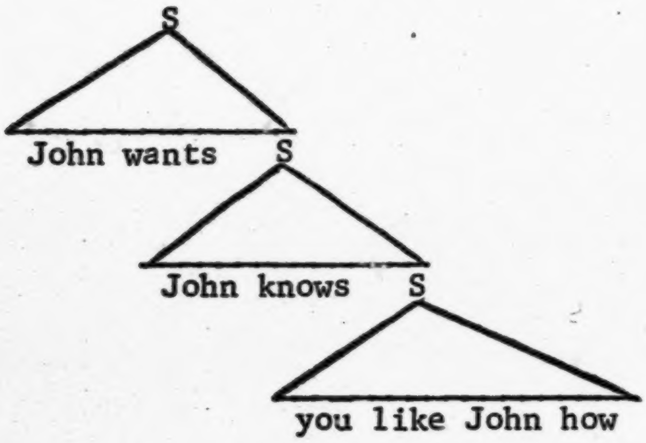
Now, however, two major problems for American education have appeared in the urban ghettos. A group permanently distinguished by the color bar--the Negro people--have appeared in large numbers in Northern schools. Their non-standard vernacular seems to be far more different from standard English than that of most white non-standard dialects. Furthermore, the over-all educational achievement of Negro children is well below that of white working class groups. It is far more difficult for the teacher to assume that this language is simply an imperfect copy of his own. The total numbers of "errors" and "deviations" mount alarmingly until it becomes apparent to most observers that there are some fundamental differences in the rules. Teachers are faced with so many problems that they simply "do not know where to begin," and many now feel the need for some understanding of the language they are dealing with, if only to economize and concentrate their efforts.

The second major problem is that of the Spanish-speaking groups in the United States, who are not losing their native language as rapidly as other groups have done. Here it is immediately evident that a knowledge of the Spanish vernacular, whether it is Puerto Rican or Mexican Spanish, will be helpful in understanding the students' performance in class. It is true that "English as a second language" is often taught without reference to the language of origin, but no one would defend this as the best approach. In our Spanish-speaking urban ghetto areas, the most immediate source of interference with standard English is not Puerto Rican or Mexican Spanish, but rather the Spanish-influenced English which is spoken every day on the streets. This dialect plays the same role for the teacher of Spanish-American children that non-standard Negro English does for the teacher of Negro children: it is the source of interference and difficulty, but it is also the best means of direct communication between him and the child. An understanding of this non-standard language is a necessary first step in understanding one's students, and achieving the basic goals of education.

2. The Nature of Language

It may seem altogether unnecessary to write very much about the nature of language in general, since all readers of this paper are speakers of one or several languages, have taught language or talked about it. Yet there are many over-simplified versions of what language is, of the "nothing but. . ." type, and some of these have indeed been encouraged by linguists. We hear that language is nothing but a series of sounds or words, a series of signals which succeed each other in linear fashion, or succession of signs which unite in each a form and a referent. Such descriptions are far too superficial to account for the complex process of translating meanings or intentions into sound. The propositions we wish to convey are intricate and many-dimensional: our language must transform these into the linear series of symbols which can be spoken: our understanding of language must enable us to reconstruct this unfolded message into the replica of the original.

Let us consider a sentence such as *John wants to know how you like him*. As it is spoken, it consists of a chain of eight words in succession. But it conveys a complex message containing at least three distinct propositions. The dominant sentence is that *John wants something*. What is that something? It is *to know something else*. There is no immediate subject of *know*,--it has been deleted by a regular rule--but it is plainly John who is *to know something else*. And that something else is *the extent to which*, or *how you like him*. We can suggest the complexity of this set of three positions by a diagram such as:



It might be possible for a language to glue these three propositions together by simple adjunction, into something like *John wants John knows you like John how*. But every school child is in control of the complex series of deletions, substitutions and foregroundings which produce *John wants to know how you like him*.

One cannot overemphasize how abstract and complex the organization of language rules is. By "rules of language" we do not mean the small number of rules that can be taught explicitly in school, but rather the very large number which the child learns for himself before he comes to school. When the five-year-old first appears in kindergarten he has learned a sizeable number of individual words; a small set of articulations which he combines to make this larger number of words; and a very intricate syntax--far richer than anything we can now describe--which combines these words into sentences. Furthermore, the child knows many rules for the use of his language which we cannot yet even begin to formalize: how to answer questions, make objections, challenges, denials, tell stories and manufacture excuses.

What are the main features of language which the child must learn in school? He has of course an alphabetic code to learn, and there are a number of word forms which have to be adjusted to the standard shape: *brefekst* or *brekfust* has to become *breakfast*. There are many formal additions to his syntax which must eventually be made: for example, he must learn that whatever structures can be used for object noun phrases can also be used for subject noun phrases: it must be possible to say, *How you like him is what John wants to know*, or even *The knowledge John wants to have is of how you like him*, but additions such as this may come very late if at all.

The child must also learn a number of alternative rules which do the same work as the rules he brought with him but in a slightly different way. *Who do you want?* and *It's me* are produced by his original rule that puts objective forms after the verb, subjective forms before; he will now be taught the rule that yields *Whom do you want?* and *It's I*, even if he does not use these in colloquial speech. *Ain't* must alternate with *isn't*, *hasn't* (or *didn't*); and the passive of *He got kicked* must alternate with *He was kicked*. In reading, he must also learn left to right visual patterning--for some children a new and difficult system--and a way of transferring information across the printed page instead of storing in an auditory short-term memory.

In all these tasks, the child's underlying *competence* must be distinguished from his *performance*. This distinction, as elaborated by Chomsky, is sometimes over-used to exclude the very data on non-standard language which we will discuss below, but it applies with over-powering force to the classroom situation. Every good teacher knows that what a child says in class is determined by many factors besides his knowledge of English. His knowledge is an abstract, often unconscious pattern which may or may not be activated by the teacher's command or the test situation. Unfortunately, those who apply objective tests to measure the child's verbal capacity usually do not take this fundamental distinction into account, and derive very misleading indices of children's linguistic skills.

We must also bear in mind the important distinction between production and perception. Not very long ago, linguists thought it might be possible to write a single grammar which would describe a person's capacity to produce and to understand language. But there is now a fair amount of evidence to show that a speaker's production and perception may not be symmetrical. The child's ability to understand language often outruns his ability to produce it, yet we often find the converse too: as when children use words that are formally correct yet inappropriate in context.

The child continues to learn language after he enters school, but not all learning is dependent upon the classroom. Through reading he begins to learn the vast Latinate vocabulary which provides the basis of the long vowel - short vowel correspondences: decide - decision; telescope - telescopic, and so on. He also will learn the social meaning of language differences; that there are sets of values clustering around language which are very different in his own peer group and in the adult world. He will acquire a rich set of rules for various speech occasions in which, as a small child, he was practically tongue-tied. For our purposes, it is important to note that he will also acquire a series of defensive manoeuvres which will enable him to present a dense, resistant front to the teacher's incessant test-questions, and help him avoid committing himself to the mistakes for which he will be penalized.

2.1. Three reasons for studying non-standard language

Since language learning does take place outside of the classroom, and the six-year-old child does have great capacity for learning new language forms as he is exposed to them, it may be asked why it should be necessary for the teacher to understand more about the child's own vernacular. First, we can observe that automatic adjustment does not take place in all cases. Even the successful, middle-class student does not always master the teacher's grammatical forms; and in the urban centers we find very little adjustment to school forms. Students continue to write I have live after ten or twelve years in school; we will describe below failures in reading the -ed suffix which show no advance with years spent in school. Secondly, knowledge of the underlying structure of the non-standard vernacular will allow the most efficient teaching. If the teacher knows the general difference between standard negative attraction and non-standard negative concord, he can teach a hundred different standard forms with the simple instruction: *the negative is attracted only to the first indefinite*. Thus:

He don't know nothing → He doesn't know anything
Nobody don't like him → Nobody likes him
Nobody hardly goes there → Hardly anybody goes there
Can't nobody do it → Nobody can do it

Thirdly, the vernacular must be understood because ignorance of it leads to serious conflict between student and teacher. Teachers in ghetto schools who continually insist that *i* and *e* sound different in *pin* and *pen* will only antagonize a great number of their students. The knowledge that *i* and *e* actually sound the same before *m* and *n* for most of their students (and "should" sound the same if they are normal speakers) will help avoid this destructive conflict. Teachers who insist that a child meant to say *He is tired* when he said *He tired* will achieve only bewilderment in the long run. Knowledge that *He tired* is the vernacular equivalent of the contracted form *He's tired* will save teacher and student from this frustration.

Granted that the teacher wishes to learn about the student's language, what methods are available for him to do so? Today, a great many linguists study English through their own intuitions; they operate "out of their own heads" in the sense that they believe they can ask and answer all the relevant questions themselves. But even if a teacher comes from the same background as his students, he will find that his grammar has changed: that he no longer has sound intuitions about whether he can say *Nobody don't know nothing about it* instead of *Nobody knows nothing about it*. He can of course sit down with a student and ask him all kinds of direct questions about his language, and there are linguists who do this. But one cannot draw directly upon the intuitions of the two major groups we are interested in: children and non-standard speakers. Both are in contact with a superordinate or dominant dialect, and both will provide answers which reflect their awareness of this dialect as much as of their own. One can of course engage in long and indirect conversations with students, hoping that all of the forms of interest will sooner or later occur, and there are linguists who have attempted to study non-standard dialects in this way. But these conversations usually teach the subject more of the investigator's language than the other way around. In general, one can say that whenever a speaker of a non-standard dialect is in a subordinate position to a speaker of a standard dialect, the rules of his grammar will shift in an unpredictable manner towards the standard. The longer the contact, the stronger and more lasting is the shift. Thus adolescent speakers of a vernacular make very unreliable informants when they are questioned in a formal framework. The investigator must show considerable sociolinguistic sophistication to cope with such a situation, and indeed the teacher will also need to know a great deal about the social forces which affect linguistic behavior if he is to interpret his students' language.

2.2. Non-standard languages as self-contained systems

The traditional view of non-standard speech as a set of isolated deviations from standard English is often countered by the opposite view: that non-standard dialect should be studied as an isolated system in its own right, without any reference to standard English. It is argued that the system of grammatical forms of a dialect can only be understood through their internal relations. For example, non-standard Negro English has one distinction which standard English does not have: there is an invariant form *be* in *He always be foolin' around* which marks habitual, general conditions, as opposed to the unmarked *is*, *am*, *are*, etc. which does not have any such special sense. It can be argued that the existence of this distinction changes the value of all other members of the grammatical system and that the entire paradigm of this dialect is therefore different from that of standard English. It is important to find such connections within the meaningful set of grammatical distinctions, because we can then *explain* rather than merely describe behavior. There are many co-occurrence rules which are purely descriptive--the particular dialect just happens to have X' *and* Y' where another has X and Y. We would like to show that a special non-standard form X' *requires* an equally non-standard Y', because of the way in which the non-standard form cuts up the entire field of meaning. This would be a tremendous help in teaching, since we would be able to show what sets of standard rules have to be taught together to avoid confusing the student with a mixed, incoherent grammatical system.

The difficulty here is that linguistics has not made very much progress in the analysis of semantic systems. There is no method or procedure which leads to reliable or reproducible results--not even among those who agree on certain principles of grammatical theory. No one has yet written a complete grammar of a language--or even come close to accounting for all the morphological and syntactic rules of a language. But the situation is much more primitive in semantics; for example, the verbal system of standard English has been studied now for many centuries; yet there is no agreement at all on the meaning of the auxiliaries _have..ed_ and _be..ing_. The meaning of _I have lived here_, as opposed to _I lived here_, has been explained as (a) relevant to the present (b) past _in_ the present (c) perfective (d) indefinite (e) causative, and so on. It is not only that there are many views--it is that in any given discussion, no linguist has really found a method by which he can reasonably hope to persuade others that he is right. If this situation prevails where most of the investigators have complete access to the data, since they are native speakers of standard English, we must be more than cautious in claiming to understand the meaning of _I be here_ as opposed to _I am here_ in non-standard Negro English, and even more cautious in claiming that the meaning of non-standard _I'm here_ therefore differs from standard _I'm here_ because of the existence of this other form. Most teachers have learned to be cautious in accepting a grammarian's statement about the meaning of their own native forms, but they have no way of judging statements made about a dialect which they do not speak, and they are naturally prone to accept such statements on the authority of the writer.

There is, however, a great deal that we can do to show the internal relations in the non-standard dialect as a system. There are a great many forms which seem different on the surface, but can be explained as expressions of a single rule, or the absence of a single rule. We observe that in non-standard Negro English, it is common to say _a apple_ rather than _an apple_. This is a grammatical fault from the point of view of standard speakers, and the school must teach _an apple_ as the written, standard form. There is also a rather low-level, unimportant feature of pronunciation which is common to Southern dialects:

in the apple, the word the has the same pronunciation as in the book, and does not rhyme with be. Furthermore, there is a feature of r-less pronunciation which is more common in the South than in the r-less regions of the North: that in four apples, r remains as a vocalic schwa, and the consonantal r does not appear, but is treated the same way as in These are four, or four books. Finally, we can note that in the South, educated white speakers keep the vocalic schwa which represents r in four, but that non-standard speakers tend to drop it (registered in dialect writing as fo' o'clock). When all these facts are put together, we can begin to explain the non-standard an apple as part of a much broader pattern. There is a general rule of English which states that we do not pronounce two (phonetic) vowels in succession. Some kind of semi-consonantal glide or consonant comes in between: either an n as in an apple; a "y" as in the apple; an r as in four apples. This rule does not hold for non-standard Negro English, in all of the cases cited. A teacher may have more success in getting students to write an apple if he presents this general rule, and connects up all of these things into a single rational pattern, even if some are not important in themselves. It will "make sense" to Negro speakers, since they never vocalize l before a vowel, and show the effect of a following vowel in many rules of their sound system.

There are many ways in which an understanding of the fundamental rules of the dialect will help to explain the surface facts. Some of the rules cited above are also important in explaining why non-standard Negro speakers sometimes delete are, but almost always delete are in He is ready, and You are ready; or why they say they book and you book but not we book. It does not always follow though, that a grammatical explanation reveals the best method for teaching standard English.

Systematic analysis may also be helpful in connecting up the non-standard forms with the corresponding standard form, and in this sense understanding the meaning of the non-standard form. For example, non-standard speakers say Ain't nobody see it. What is the nearest standard equivalent? We can connect this up with the standard negative foreground of Scarcely did anybody see it, or even more simply the literary Nor did anybody see it. This foregrounding fits in with the general colloquial Southern pattern with indefinite subjects: *Didn't anybody see it*, non-standard *Didn't nobody see it*. On the other hand, we could connect up *Ain't nobody see it* with the sentence *It ain't nobody see it*, once we realize that the dummy *it* of non-standard Negro English corresponds to standard *there*. The standard equivalent may be *There isn't anybody who sees it*. Such an explanation is more probable in the case of the non-standard pattern *Ain't nothin' went down*. If some uses one of these forms, it seems important for the teacher to know what was intended, so that he can supply the standard equivalent. To do so, one must know a great deal about many underlying rules of non-standard dialect, and also the rules of English in general.

Any analysisof the non-standard dialect which pretends to ignore other dialects and the general rules of English will fail, because (1) the non-standard dialect is *not* an isolated system, but a part of the sociolinguistic structure of English, and (2) the writer's knowledge of standard English; but it would be unrealistic to think that we can write anything but a superficial account of the dialect if we confine our thinking to this one sub-system, and ignore whatever progress has been made in the understanding of English grammar.

This paper will not attempt to give a systematic account of any one non-standard dialect, but rather dwell upon the general principles which relate the non-standard dialect to English as a whole--the knowledge which one must have in order to study a non-standard language successfully. Much of this knowledge has been gained in the course of current studies of language in its wider social setting--an area sometimes called "sociolinguistics." In the next section we will present some of these findings--not as part of a separate or special kind of linguistics, but rather as principles which one needs for the realistic and accurate study of any language.

3. Some Sociolinguistic Principles

Style shifting. One of the fundamental principles of sociolinguistic investigation might simply be stated as: there are no single-style speakers. By this we mean that every speaker will show some variation in phonological and syntactic rules according to the immediate context in which he is speaking. We can demonstrate that such stylistic shifts are determined by (a) the relations of the speaker, addressee, and audience, and particularly the relations of power or solidarity among them; (b) the wider social context or "domain": school, job, home, neighborhood, church; (c) the topic. One must add of course that the stylistic range and competence of the speaker may vary greatly. Children may have a very narrow range in both the choices open to them and the social contexts they respond to. Old men often show a narrow range in that their motivation for style shifting disappears along with their concern for power relationships.

We apply the principle stated above in a very concrete way when carrying out or interpreting face-to-face interviews. No attempt is made to judge the absolute stylistic level of the speaker by some absolute standard of "casualness." We assume that as long as we are asking questions and receiving answers, the speaker is using a relatively "careful" or "consultative" style; and that he possesses a more "casual" or intimate style with which he argues with his friends or quarrels with his family. There are techniques for obtaining casual speech in an interview situation, but the soundest approach is to observe the speaker interacting with the peers who control his speech in every-day life when the observer is not there.

Well-developed social variables show a systematic range of style shifting which is correlated with the amount of attention paid to speech. We can easily observe such style shifting in certain long-standing variables which are common to almost all dialects of English. The th of thing and that can appear as a smooth fricative "th" sound, the standard variant; as a "t"-like sound lightly or strongly articulated; as a combination of these two; or as a zero as in Gimme 'at. For most Americans, the proportions of these forms are nicely blended and graded for each stylistic level--at different absolute levels for different social groups and different regions. Similarly, the alternation of -ing and -in' in unstressed syllables is a systematic stylistic variable for most Americans--again at different levels for different classes and regions.

At one time, the dialect areas of the Eastern United States were sharply divided into r-less and r-pronouncing areas, according to whether consonantal r is pronounced in words like car and card. But in the last two decades r-pronunciation of "general American" has become accepted as the standard of broadcast networks, and of careful middle-class pronunciation almost everywhere. As a result, we find that the new "prestige" pronunciation of r in final and pre-consonantal position has become a sociolinguistic variable in the older r-less areas. Almost all younger and middle-aged speakers will show some style shifting with r, so that in the more formal styles they will use more r, and in casual speech practically none at all.

The grammatical variables that show style shifting are quite well known in general, though we usually lack the exact knowledge of where and when these features are used to signal change of style. Some are well-established stereotypes, like ain't. Although dictionaries may vary in the way they label ain't, most native speakers are quite clear in their sociolinguistic approach to this--in their social evaluation of the form. To make the point clear, one can imagine a community in which ain't is the formal style and in which people correct to isn't when they are careful. Such a community would be very odd indeed--obviously not a part of the same American speech community in which we all live.

The "double negative" or negative concord is an important stylistic marker; it allows us to express negatives in a particularly emphatic fashion by reduplicating the negative forms (Nobody don't know about that) and at the same time register adherence to the non-standard form which is stylistically opposed to the standard (Nobody knows anything about that).

The passive has two forms in English, which are closely allied but perhaps not equivalent in meaning. If we ask "What happened to him?" the answer can be "He got run over" or "He was run over." The colloquial form is clearly the former; non-standard dialects depend almost entirely upon this got-passive, to the exclusion of the be-passive. As a result, the be-passive has acquired a standard, rather careful flavor which it would not have if there were no opposing forms.

Another grammatical variable which has been studied in detail is pronominal apposition: the development of a dependent pronoun in My sister she works at the bank. There is a general tendency in all colloquial speech to simplify subject forms, so that the "new" matter is plainly confined to the predicate of the preposition. This tendency reaches its most extreme form in many non-standard dialects, although pronominal apposition is never obligatory.

In all these examples, we can easily demonstrate the meaning of the stylistic alternation by observing the direction of correction in false starts. In every interview, one will find speakers saying things like "Nobody told him noth--anything about it." No matter how rare or how common such corrections may be, we find that they uniformly run in the same direction. It is extremely rare to find individuals who correct in the other direction. That is because the more formal style is associated with a mental set in which greater attention is paid to speech, and the less formal style with a casual and spontaneous use of language in which the minimum attention is given to the speech process.

It should be clear that the various sociolinguistic variables found in American English are rarely confined to one or the other dialect, but typically range from one end to the other of the stylistic range. There are some which are never used in standard literary or formal English; but as a rule we find that dialects differ primarily in the way in which they use these variables--that is, in the distribution of frequencies along the stylistic range. It would follow that writing a different grammar for each dialect is a wasteful and unnatural procedure--rather it seems likely that the various dialects of English can be organized within a single pan-dialectal grammar. However, there are cases in which dialects differ sharply and abruptly from each other, and use forms which appear to be meaningless or contradictory to those from other communities; this is particularly common with non-standard Negro English, as we shall see, and in a number of ways this dialect appears to be a different "system." It may be that single grammars can only be written for dialects whose speakers are actually in contact with each other--which are mutually intelligible in the clearest sense. This problem has not been resolved, but in general we can say that few sociolinguistic variables are confined to single dialects.

So far we have been speaking of monolingual style shifting. On the face of it, the shift to another language in bilingual situations seems to be a radically different step. Bilingual speakers do not think of Spanish as another "style" of English. However, there is a functional relation between different languages and different styles which cannot be overlooked. Research in stable bilingual communities indicates that one natural unit of study may be the "linguistic repertoire" of each speaker rather than individual languages; such repertoires may include a wide range of styles in one language, and a narrow range in another. The sum total of styles and languages occupies a given range of situation or contexts in which the person interacts with others--linguistic "domains" such as home, neighborhood, job, church, store, school and newspapers. A monolingual individual uses and understands a wide range of styles which are specialized for various domains; bilingual individuals rarely use both languages over all domains, but rather show a comparable specialization of languages and uneven distribution of styles within these languages. When we encounter an individual in one particular domain--at home or in school--we can often judge by the range of style shifting in a given language in what domain he habitually uses that language. For example, a first-generation Spanish-English bilingual may use a fairly formal Spanish in interviews, learned in school, and use a very colloquial Spanish at home, but have available in English only a non-standard dialect which he learned on the streets. A second-generation Spanish speaker may reverse this pattern, with Spanish confined to a very informal pattern used at home.

3.1. The social stratification of language

In 1948, John Kenyon introduced the distinction between cultural levels and functional varieties of English. He argued that we should recognize a colloquial standard and a formal non-standard, as well as a formal standard and a colloquial non-standard--in other words, that style and class stratification of language are actually independent. This would seem to be a common sense distinction, and it would obviously be useful and helpful if language were organized in this manner. Then no matter how casually an educated person spoke, we would have no trouble in recognizing him as an educated person.

It is remarkable that this is not the case. In actual fact, the same variables which are used in style shifting also distinguish cultural or social levels of English. This is so for stable phonological variables such as th- and -ing, for such incoming prestige forms as -r; for the grammatical variables such as pronominal apposition, double negative, or even the use of ain't. If we plot the average values of these phonological variables for both style and social levels, we find such regular patterns as Figures 1-a and 1-b for th- and -ing. The vertical axis is the proportion of the non-standard variant used; the horizontal axis shows various styles, from casual speech to the reading of isolated words. Each point on this graph shows the average value of a group of speakers--a socio-economic class in this case--in a particular style, and the lines connect all the values of (th) and (ing) for a given social group. Note that at each style, there is social stratification: whether we are listening to casual speech or to reading, it is clear that the social background of the speaker is reflected in his use of these variables. But each group also shows regular style shifting in the same direction; so although these social groups are very different in one sense, they are all very similar in another sense: they all use the variable in the same way. But members of a speech community are not aware of this. Their experience is limited to (a) a wide range of speech styles among their own family and friends, and (b) the speech of a wide range of social classes in one or two styles. Thus the teacher hears the differences between middle class and working class children in classroom recitation, but does not follow his students home and hear them at their ease among their own friends. He does not realize how similar the students are to him--how they fit into the same sociolinguistic structure which governs his own behavior. Instead, teachers like most of us tend to perceive the speech of others categorically: John always says dese and dose, but Henry never does. Few teachers are able to perceive that they themselves use the same non-standard forms in their most casual speech; as we will see, almost everyone hears himself as using the norm which

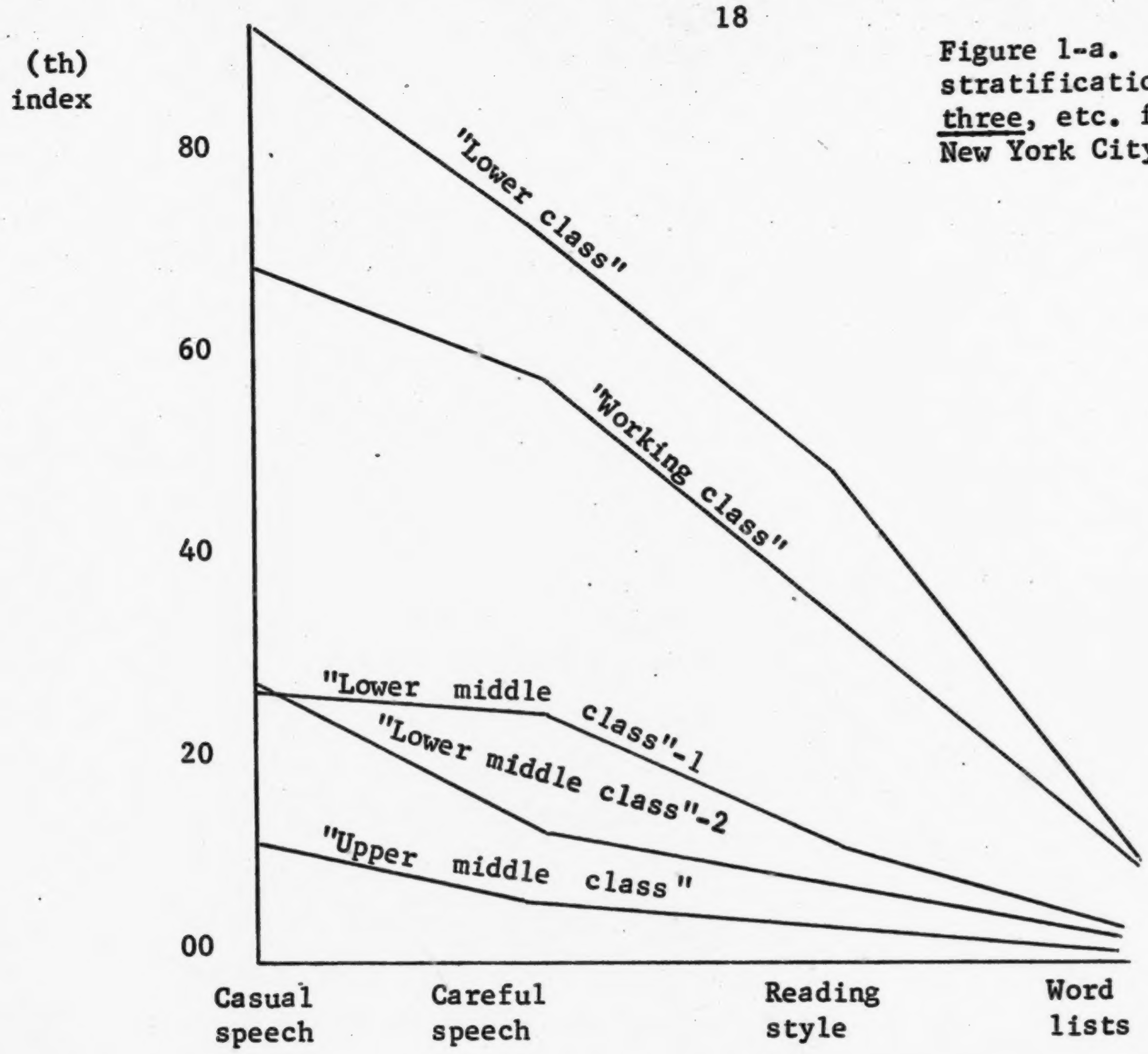


Figure 1-a. Class and style stratification of (th) in thing, three, etc. for adult native New York City speakers.

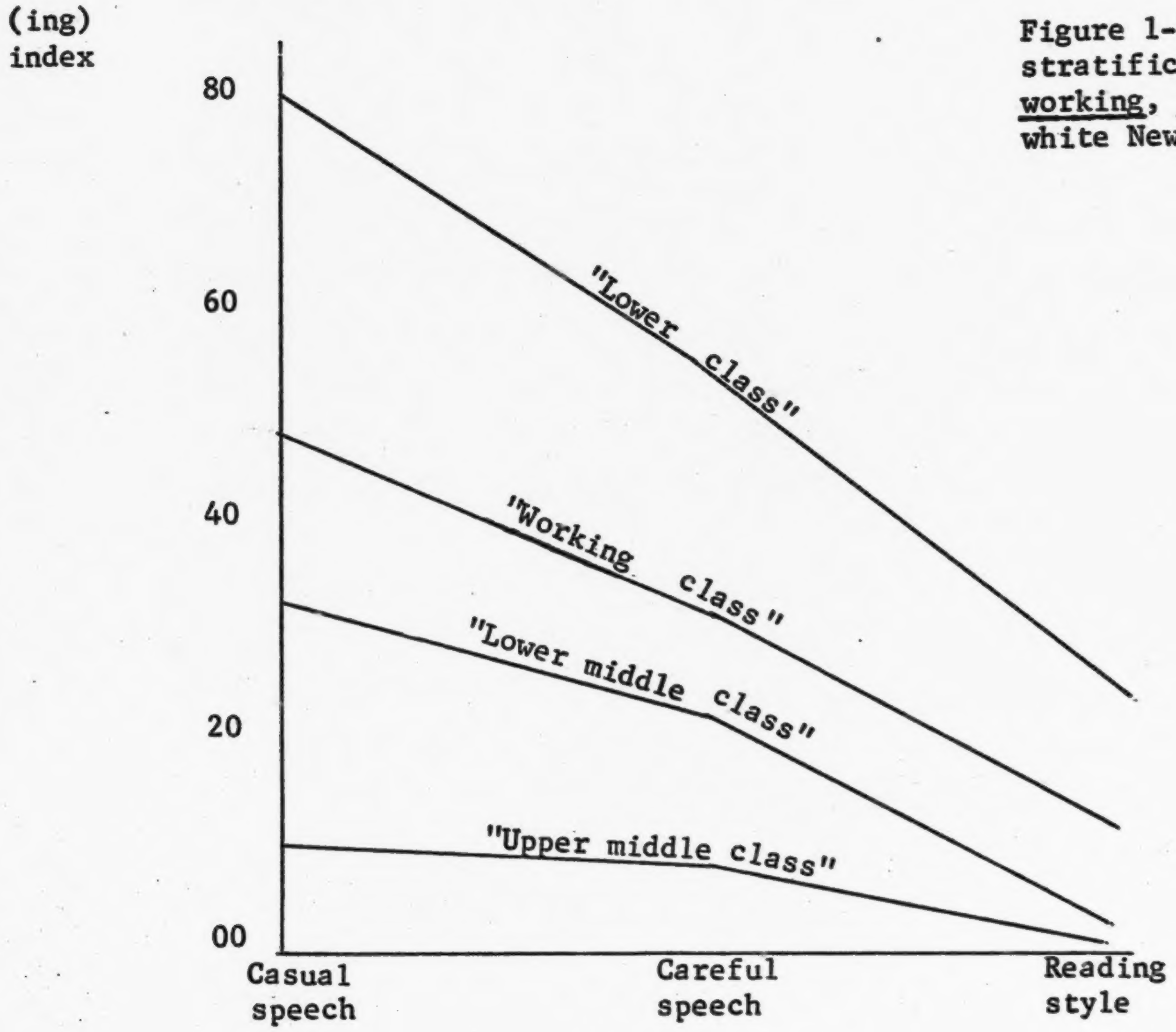


Figure 1-b. Class and style stratification of (ing) in working, living, etc., for white New York City adults.

guides his speech production in most formal styles. In a word, the differences between speakers are more obvious than their similarities.

Thus we see that the same linguistic features are used to register style shifting and social stratification--functional varieties *and* cultural levels. This situation is not unique to English. It is generally the case--even in the languages of Southeast Asia which have extremely complex systems for registering respect. True enough, there are general features of articulation and voice quality which tend to mark the educated speaker for us no matter what linguistic forms he uses, but such qualities are neither universal nor highly reliable. It may seem astonishing that sociolinguistic structure provides so much chance for confusion; given this interlocking of style and class markers, there is considerable opportunity for misjudging the background or attitude of strangers. Yet it is also logical that languages should develop in this fashion, for each group models its formal style on the speech behavior of those groups one or two steps above it in the social scale. The secretary patterns her formal speech on that of her boss; but the working man in the shop seldom hears the language of front-office people directly; his chief model for formal communication seems to be the speech of office clerks and secretaries. Unless the language shows extraordinarily strong prohibitions against "mixing levels" we will then see such regular patterns of shifting as in Figure 1. Such very discrete levels or codes do exist in some societies, and even in our own--the archaic English of the King James Bible, for example, has a fairly well-established set of co-occurrence rules which are used productively in sermons, but not elsewhere in standard English. Such a co-occurrence rule governs the agreement of the second singular *thou* with the verb form *hast*: one cannot switch from *you have* to *you hast* or to *thou have*, but both changes must be made together. One can also argue that lexical choices are determined by such strict co-occurrence rules--that it is equally a violation to say *Thou has been swell to me, Lord*. But this violation breaks a different kind of rule (termed a "Type II" rule below)--such violations *do* occur and they can be interpreted.

So far, we have been considering stable sociolinguistic situations. Wherever the language is in the process of change, there is a tendency for the new forms to be adopted first by one social group, and only gradually spread to others. The social value attributed to these forms is derived from the values associated with the groups which introduced them. Thus hip slang such as *dig* and *boss* introduced from the Negro ghettos has one type of prestige, and is used most frequently in the most casual speech. Spelling pronunciations such as *often* with a *t* or *calm* with an *l* are introduced by lower middle class speakers, and gradually spread to higher and lower social groups. As these linguistic changes mature, and especially if the item becomes subject to an overt social stigma, the variable develops a characteristic pattern of style shifting, with the type of results which we see in Figure 1. When the change goes to completion, the possibility of choice disappears, and with it the social value associated with the item. Today, the spelling pronunciation of *recognize* with a *g* is standard, and it has lost the over-careful, insecure character it must have had when it was first introduced. But incoming pronunciations such as "*perculator*" or "*esculator*" now stand at the other end of the spectrum. At any one time, social groups will differ in their attitude towards particular linguistic variables in process of change. For some, there is no problem in *It's I* vs. *It's me*; *Whom do you want*? vs. *Who do you want*?; or *He does it as he should* vs. *He does it like he should*. For others, these are matters of paralyzing concern. The norms for pronouncing *vase* and *aunt* are now shifting, so that many people literally register panic when they encounter these words in a text to be read aloud. Faced with two conflicting norms, society occasionally finds a meaningful use for both. As one woman said in an interview, "These little ones are my *vayses* (rhyming with mazes); but these big ones are my *vahses* (rhyming with Roz's)."

The sharpness of the social stratification of language seems to vary with the degree of social mobility which exists in society as a whole. In London and its environs, we find that the use of initial *f-* for standard *th-* is a uniform characteristic of working class speech, but it is not heard in the standard speech of adults. Moreover, in their most careful, "posh" pronunciation, many working class speakers say *fings*, *free* and *frow* for *things*, *three* and *throw*. In the United States, we do not find such sharp stratification among white working class speakers: stops are common enough in these words: *tings*, *tree*, and trow. But as Figure 1 shows, even the lowest ranking social group has no difficulty in saying things, three and throw when reading word lists. However, we do find sharp social stratification between white and Negro speakers in the United States, where a pattern of caste rather than class differentiation has prevailed for several centuries. We then can observe such differentiation between ethnic groups as the non-standard Negro English difficulty with -sps, -sts, -sks clusters. Many Negro speakers literally cannot say wasps, lists or desks: these plurals are normally wasses, lisses and desses, forms which are quite unknown in the surrounding white community.

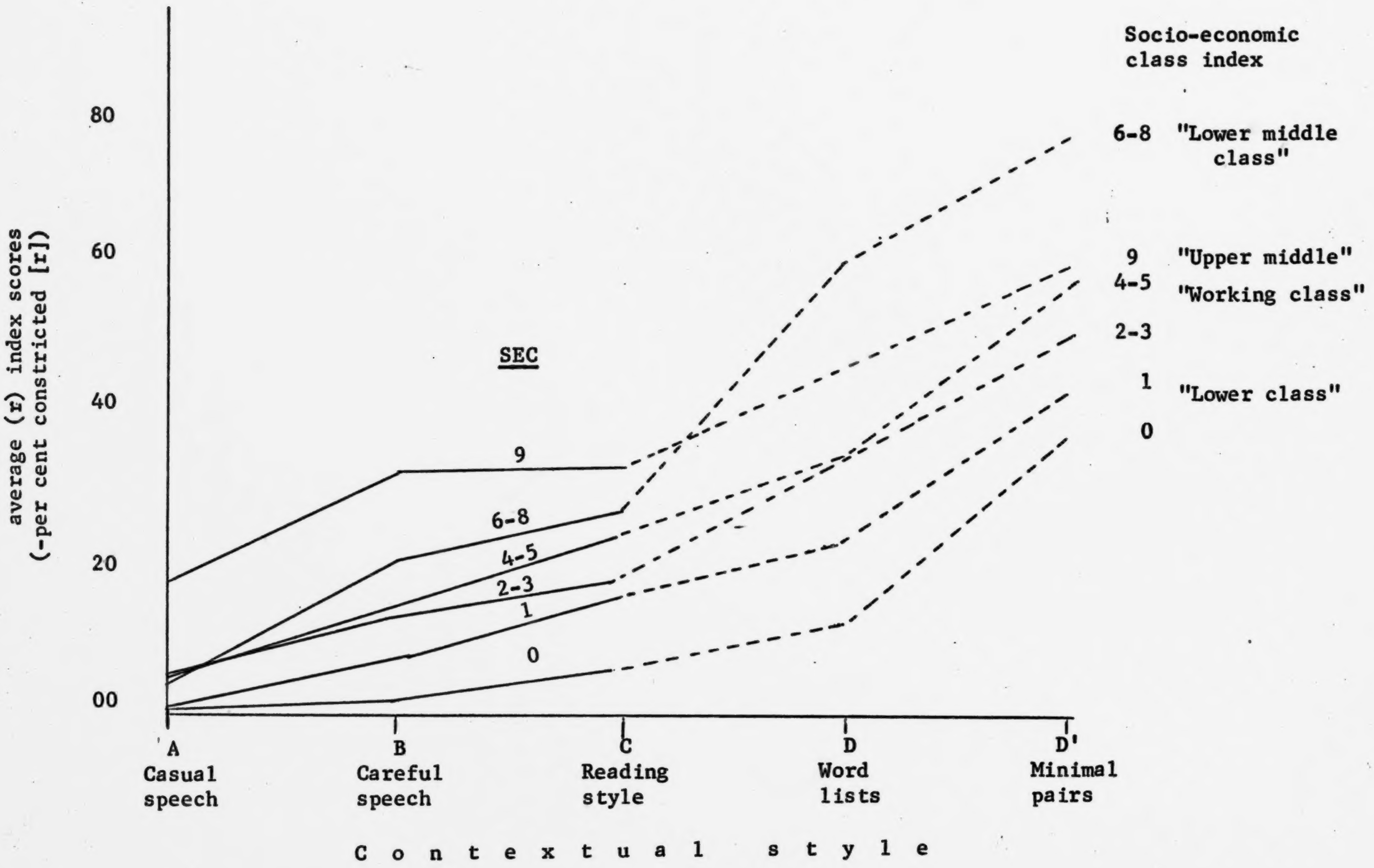
The ethnic stratification of society is thus reflected in linguistic patterns--sometimes partly independent of socioeconomic factors, and sometimes closely interlocked with them. In New York City, the Jewish and Italian populations differ from each other in subtle ways as they both follow the general evolution of the vernacular. The Italians are far more forward in their raising of the vowel of bad to equal that of beard; the Jews, on the other hand, are somewhat more advanced in their tendency to raise the vowel of law to that of lure. In Phoenix, Arizona, the on-going linguistic change which merges cot and caught, Don and dawn, is much more characteristic of the Anglo population than the Negroes and the Mexicans: the latter groups preserve much more the distinction between short o and long open o. In most urban ghetto areas, we find that the southern characteristic of merging i and e before nasals has become generalized among the Negro population, so that Negroes of all geographic backgrounds neither make nor hear the difference between pin and pen, Jim and gem, while the surrounding white population still preserves the distinction. This is one of many cases where a feature of Southern regional dialect has been transported to an urban setting to become an ethnic and class marker.

When the ethnic group still preserves a foreign language for at least one social domain, we find clear traces of it in their English. Some foreign accents have high prestige in the United States--English is the most outstanding example--but usually not where there is a large immigrant group which speaks this language. But even where bilingual speakers use a fairly native English, it is usually marked by its limited stylistic range. Thus many who have learned English as a second language are marked by having an excellent, even native careful style but no casual or intimate style at all.

Breaks in social communication between groups in society are reflected in the failure of certain linguistic items to cross the barrier between the groups. While certain kinds of slang pass freely and continuously from the Negro community into the white community, other grammatical and lexical items remain fixed, and we can witness pluralistic ignorance where neither group perceives the actual situation: one knows nothing about the form at all, and the other assumes that its use is quite general. Negro speakers have traditionally used _mother-wit_ as the equivalent of _common sense_, but no white speakers know this term except as an archaic and literary form. The Negro vernacular uses dummy _it_ for _there_, saying _it's a difference_; _it's no one there_; _it's a policeman at the door_; but despite their long contact with Negro speakers in person and in dialect literature, the neighboring white speakers know nothing of this pattern.

The regular pattern of Figure 1 is that of a stable sociolinguistic marker. When the marker is in the process of change, we see patterns more like that of Figure 2, which shows the incoming prestige marker of _r_-pronunciation. The steepness of the lines is not the same for all groups: in particular, we observe that the lower middle class shows the sharpest shift towards _r_-pronunciation in formal styles, going even beyond the highest social group in this respect. This "hypercorrect" behavior, or "going one better," is quite characteristic of second-ranking groups in many communities. We find similar behavior in the _r_-pronunciation of such distant areas as Hillsboro, North Carolina as well as New York City, and in over-correct grammatical behavior as well as in pronunciation. The sharpness of such style shifting is a direct reflection of the degree of linguistic insecurity felt by a particular group: that is, the tendency to shift away from the natural pattern of casual speech is proportionate to the recognition of an external standard of correctness. We can measure the strength of such feelings by various tests which reflect the extent to which

Figure 2. Class stratification of (r) in guard, car, beer, beard, etc. for native New York City adults



people will say "That is the correct way to say it, but this is the way I say it." Since American school teachers have traditionally been drawn from the lower middle class, the strong tendency towards hypercorrect behavior which we see here must be reckoned with in designing any educational program. Along with linguistic insecurity and extreme range of style shifting, one encounters an extreme intolerance towards other dialects. For decades, educational leaders have asked teachers to regard the child's non-standard language as "another" way of speaking, to recognize it as simply "different" from school language rather than condemning it as sloppy or illogical. However, many teachers find it difficult to adopt this attitude, since they recognize in the child's language (perhaps unconsciously) the very pattern which they so sharply correct in themselves. It is extraordinary to witness how violently some people will express themselves on such apparently trivial points as the height of the vowel in bad. It is not uncommon for people to stigmatize a certain pronunciation by saying, "I would never hire a person who talked like that!" Such extreme reactions are quite common in our schools, and all teachers should be on the watch for them to the extent that they interfere with the process of education itself.

3.2. Types of linguistic rules

In the last few pages, we have been concerned with a kind of linguistic behavior which has seldom been studied in the past: variable rules. There is no fixed instruction in English as to how we must pronounce the th of then in any given case; instead there are several choices. But these choices are not in free variation. There is an important variable rule which tells us that those who pronounce then with a d- sound more than "once in a while", are stigmatized as uneducated or lower class. Anyone who does not know this rule is not a very good speaker of English. Rules of this sort--which we will designate Type III-are quite common in English. Despite the fact that they cannot be violated with any given pronunciation of a word, they are an important part of our linguistic competence.

The kind of rules which are generally taught in school are of a different sort. They state "Do not do this at all!" For example, "Don't say ain't!" But there is an added provision, usually unstated: "unless you want to fail" or "unless you want to be known as stupid or uneducated". These rules are cast in categorical form, but they are what we might call _semi-categorical_: they are written in the full knowledge that people do indeed make violations, and that one can interpret such violations. There is a ready-made label or interpretation which goes with the breaking of the rules. This labeling is not of course, a simple matter, because some utterances of _ain't_ are taken as jokes, others as slips, and still others as evidence of habitual violations. But in the school situation, each utterance of _ain't_ is marked as a violation, and reprimanded as such. We may call such rules Type II rules. When Type II rules are overtly violated, the violation is rare enough to be worth reporting: such violations are thus _reportable_, and an appropriate response to the report is, "He did?" "He did say that?" If a school teacher were to use _ain't_ in the middle of a grammar class, it would indeed make a story worth telling. It is common to find Type II rules at the beginning or at the end of a linguistic change in progress, where the form is rare enough to be noticed whenever it occurs. The broad _a_ pronunciation of _aunt_ and _bath_ is almost extinct as a prestige form among white speakers in the middle Atlantic states. "Bahth" and "ahnt" survive as rare examples of adherence to an older prestige pattern, but are frequently stigmatized as false attempts to impress the listener. They survive in another way which is characteristic of Type II rules: "I'm going to the bahthroom" was originally taken as a humorous play on the notion of falsely impressing someone, and now is becoming fossilized into a common and almost unrecognized standard joke.

Most linguistic rules are of an altogether different character. They are automatic, deep-seated patterns of behavior which are not consciously recognized and are never violated. Rules for contraction of _is_ form one such set of automatic rules among countless others, which we may call Type I. No one is taught in school the very complex conditions under which one can, if desired, contract is to 's: that one can do so in He's here, but not *Here he's; in He's ready, but not *What he's is smart. Such automatic rules exist in all forms of social behavior, but they are extremely hard to detect simply because they are never violated and one never thinks about them at all. For example, in asking someone for directions, one thinks about who to ask, and what polite forms to use, but never about whether one should introduce oneself. "Hello, I'm Bill Labov, where's Grant Central Station?" is a violation which never occurs. If one artificially constructs such a violation, people are simply confused; they cannot interpret it, and the most appropriate response is "Wha'?" Linguists have been discovering and formulating such Type I rules for many centuries, and most of our papers are concerned with them. They are in effect the backbone of linguistic structure; without them we would find it very difficult to speak at all. If English teachers indeed had the job of "teaching the child how to speak English", it would be incredibly more difficult than the job which they actually do face, which is to instruct children in a small number of Type II rules and some basic vocabulary for talking about language. We can summarize this discussion of rule typology by the following chart:

Rule type	How often rule operates	Violations	Response to violations	Example
I	100%	None	Wha'?	Rules for when one can contract is: "He is" vs. *"He's".
II	95-99%	Reportable	He did?	"Why you ain't never giving me no A's?"
III	5-95%	Unreportable	So what?	"He sure got an A" vs. "He surely got an A".

3.3. Linguistic norms

Sociolinguistic behavior, as we have seen, is typically stratified. Such behavior reflects a set of norms, beliefs, or subjective attitudes towards particular features and towards language in general. The regular stratification of behavior shown above has a subjective counterpart: uniform linguistic norms, in which all speakers of the community join in their evaluation of the feature in question. In our society, these values are middle class norms, since the middle class is the dominant group in school, business, and mass communications. Certain linguistic forms, like the fricative th in then, the -ing in working, the -ly in surely, are considered more suitable for people holding certain kinds of jobs. One can set up a scale of jobs that require more or less excellent speech, which will obtain very general agreement; such as "television announcer, school teacher, office manager, salesman, post office clerk, foreman, factory worker". The converse values are equally uniform: that non-standard language like the d- then, the -in' in workin' or the never in Nobody never knows--are characteristic of "tough" guys who not only like to fight, but who come out on top. Those familiar with street culture know that there is in fact little correlation between toughness and the use of non-standard language, but the stereotype seems to be well established. The fact that both values--job suitability and toughness--are clearest in the reports of middle class speakers, suggests to us that both sets are in fact taught in school. If the teacher does in fact identify non-standard language with the fighting element in school, it seems inevitable that he will convey this notion to the students in the class and so gradually reinforce the values already present in the mass media.

The stability and uniformity of social values in respect to language are quite extraordinary. Social revolutions such as those which have taken place in Eastern European countries, characteristically fail to overturn the sociolinguistic norms of the society; on the contrary, prohibitions against using vernacular forms in writing may grow even stricter. We can judge from impressionistic reports that this seems to be the case in the Soviet Union as well as Czechoslovakia. In our own society, we find that all social groups share the same set of norms as far as correct and public language. Radical and revolutionary figures do not use non-standard grammar in public or in print: on the contrary, they endorse the rules of grammar as strictly as the conservative journals do. There has been a long tradition in the United States for politicians to appeal to the public with a sprinkling of the vernacular in their platform speeches. But such displays are confined rather strictly to certain set situations, and the same speakers insist on correct or even formal grammar in all formal or solemn statements. The leaders of the black nationalist movement among the Negro people do not use non-standard Negro English in their public speeches. Their grammar is quite standard. Although there is a growing tendency to use fragments of vernacular language in public speeches, careful analysis shows that these are isolated elements; the basic grammar and phonology used is that of the middle class community, essentially that which is taught in school.

In highly stratified situations, where society is divided into two major groupings, the values associated with the dominant group are assigned to the dominant language by all. Lambert and his colleages at McGill University have shown how regular such unconscious evaluations are in the French-English situation of Quebec, in the Arabic-Hebrew confrontation in Israel, and in other areas as well. When English Canadians hear the same person speaking Canadian French, on the one hand, and English, on the other, they unhesitatingly judge him to be more intelligent, more dependable, kinder, more ambitious, better looking and taller--when he spoke English. Common sense would tell us that French-Canadians would react in the opposite manner, but in fact they do not. Their unconscious judgments reflect almost the same set of unconscious values as the English-Canadians show. This overwhelming negative evaluation of Canadian French is a property of the society as a whole. It is an omnipresent stigma which determines what happens in school as well as in other social contexts.

Such a uniform set of norms defines a speech community. People in the United States do not share the Canadian reaction to Canadian French. They do share a number of uniform values about non-standard dialects, but they also differ considerably in their reaction to particular features, depending upon the underlying vernacular of the region. The short a of mad, bad, glad is a crucial matter in New York City--in fact, it is probably the one feature of pronunciation which working class speakers pay most attention to in careful speech. In Philadelphia, the vowels are more strikingly different from the formal standard, but people don't care very much about it. A far more crucial issue for Philadelphia is the vowel of go and road. The Philadelphia and Pittsburgh forms have a centralized beginning, very similar to that of some high prestige British dialects. As a result, the Philadelphia vernacular forms sound elegant and cultivated to New York speakers, and the New York forms with a lower, unrounded beginning, sound elegant and impressive to the Philadelphians. Conversely, the Philadelphians and the New Yorkers both despise their own vernacular forms. In general, it is an important sociolinguistic principle that those who use the highest degree of a stigmatized form in their own casual speech are quickest to stigmatize it in the speech of others. This principle has important consequences for the classroom situation. The teacher from the same community has the advantage that he can realistically detect and correct the most important non-standard features of his students; but he has the disadvantage that he will react to these features in an extreme, sometimes unrealistic fashion. This is most relevant to questions of pronunciation. Grammatical norms are fairly uniform throughout the United States, and our chief sources of regional variation have to do with the pronunciation of vowels.

3.4 Differences between the sexes

In some societies, there are striking differences between men's and women's speech, but in the United States, we do not find widespread variation in the actual features of language used by the sexes. There are marginal examples: men are more apt to say "Fill 'er up" than women are; men use more obscene language than women do--in public.

But the major differences between the sexes are in the important areas of attitudes towards language. The sociolinguistic behavior of women is quite different from that of men because they respond to the commonly held normative values in a different way. Such differences appear in our earliest studies of sociolinguistic variables. In Fischer's 1958 study of the use of -ing and -in' in a New England village, we find that both boys and girls use both variants. But among the girls, ten out of twelve used more -ing than -in', while among the boys, only five out of twelve did. In general, women are more sensitive to overt social correction, and use more prestige forms than men. But this difference is not independent of social class. It is moderately true for the highest status group in a speech community, but the effect is far more striking in the second highest status group. Here the difference may appear in an extreme form. Below a certain point in the social scale, the effect is often reversed. For lower-class women who live at home, on welfare or without a regular occupation, we can observe less awareness of sociolinguistic norms, and less response to them.

A typical pattern is that shown by men and women in their use of pronominal apposition--that is, My brother he's pretty good. In Roger Shuy's sociolinguistic study of Detroit, we find the following indexes for the use of this non-standard feature by men and women. (Shuy, 1967)

STATUS GROUP:	I	II	III	IV
Men	5.0	19.3	23.1	25.0
Women	4.8	9.2	27.2	23.7

The difference between the highest status speakers is negligible as far as the sexes are concerned. The picture is quite mixed for the lower groups. But in the second highest group there is a very great difference between men and women: women use less than half as much pronominal apposition as men.

When we examine the full spectrum of stylistic behavior for men and women, it appears that the crucial differences lie in the steeper slope of style shifting for women: in all but the lowest status group they may actually use more of a non-standard form in their casual speech than men, but in formal styles they shift more rapidly and show an excess of hypercorrect behavior at that end of the scale. Furthermore, women respond in a much more extreme fashion to subjective reaction tests than men, and are far more prone to stigmatize non-standard usage. The overall picture of women's behavior fits in with the general sociolinguistic principle stated above--that those who use more non-standard forms in their own casual speech will be most sensitive to those forms in the speech of others. The hypercorrect pattern of the second highest status group is accentuated in women. This is particularly important for the schools, since the majority of our teachers are women, and it is their reaction to non-standard language with which we must be concerned in examining the educational applications of these findings.

3.5. Stages in the acquisition of standard English

In the sociolinguistic study of language learning, we can begin with the fundamental observation that *children do not speak like their parents*. This is indeed surprising, since we obviously learn to speak from our parents. If the child's parents speak English, and he grows up in the United States, he will certainly have English as his native language. Yet in almost every detail, his English will resemble that of his peers, rather than that of his parents. We have as yet no thorough-going studies of the relation of parent, child and peer group, yet all of the available evidence shows that this is the case. With a few exceptions, second generation speakers in a given area will be as fully native as the third and fourth generation. As a rule, the child becomes a native speaker of a particular dialect between the ages of roughly four and thirteen. If the child moves into a new area at the age of ten or eleven, the chances are that he will never acquire the local dialect pattern as completely as those who were born and raised in that area.

In some towns of northeastern New Jersey, for example, we find that adults do not equate *spirit* and *spear it*, nor do they rhyme *nearer* and *mirror*--that is, they do distinguish the vowels of *beat* and *bit* before intervocalic *r*. But the children in this area use the higher vowel of *beat* for both *nearer* and *mirror*, *mysterious* and *delirious*.

In the middle class sections of the same region, most parents come from New York City and have an r-less vernacular, but almost all children are solidly r-pronouncing. Most parents are not aware of how systematically their children's speech differs from their own; if they do inquire, they will be surprised to find that there is no fixed relation between their own rules and those of their children. Instead, it is the local group of their children's peers which determines this generation's speech pattern. This is the case with rules of non-standard urban dialects as well as the more neutral rules of regional dialects considered here.

The full force of peer group influence may not indeed appear in the speech of the six-year-old in the first grade. It is in the fourth and fifth grade, when the ten-year-old begins to come under the full influence of the pre-adolescent peer group, that we obtain the most consistent records of his dialect. It should also be pointed out that it is at this age that many school records show sharp downward trends, and this is not unconnected with the fact that peer groups present a more solid resistance to the schoolroom culture than any individual child can.

In the process of language learning, there are many sections of the vocabulary which are acquired quite late. It is possible that the underlying linguistic system used by a child will be different from that of adults if he has learned very little of the Latinate vocabulary before the age of thirteen. Word alternations such as microscope ~ microscopy, decide ~decision, pérmit ~permít, give the crucial evidence which supports and justifies the spelling system of English. We are badly lacking in any systematic studies of children's total vocabulary (active and passive) in the early grades; it is this vocabulary which provides the input to whatever linguistic insight the child has into English spelling, and this is the equipment which he brings to the task of learning to read.

It is at an even later stage that the child acquires the sociolinguistic norms discussed in the preceding sections. Whereas the adult community shows almost complete agreement in responses to subjective reaction tests, adolescents are quite sketchy in their perceptions of these value systems. Children certainly know that there is a great difference between school language and home language, teacher language and their own language; but they know surprisingly little of the social significance of these differences. A conversation with a twelve-year-old may run like this:

> "Have you ever heard anyone say dese, dat and dose?"
> "Un-huh."
> "What kind of person says that?"
> "I don't know."

Anything that can be done within the educational process to accelerate the learning of these adult norms will certainly have an effect upon the desire to learn standard English.

If we map the acquisition of the adult sociolinguistic pattern in families with many children, we find that there is a steady upward movement with age. Families of all social levels follow the same general direction, in that older children show more style shifting and more sensitive subjective reactions that younger children. But there is regular class stratification in this area too. Middle-class families start at a higher level, and accelerate faster, so that middle-class children may have a fully adult sociolinguistic system in their late teens. In college, these children will receive the most intensive training in the use of middle-class, formal language. On the other hand, working-class families start at a lower level, and their children may not converge on the adult system until their thirties or forties. At this point, it is obviously far too late for them to acquire productive control of prestige patterns: their performance is erratic and unreliable, even if they are capable of judging the performance of others.

In general, we find that norms acquired later in life, especially after puberty, never achieve the automatic regularity of a Type I rule. A certain amount of audio-monitoring, or attention paid to speech, is necessary if any degree of consistency is to be achieved with such patterns. When the speaker is tired, or distracted, or unable to hear himself, this acquired or "superposed" pattern gives way in favor of the native vernacular acquired early in life. He may also stop monitoring his speech for the opposite reasons--when he is intensely excited, emotionally disturbed, or very much involved in the subject.

It is an important sociolinguistic principle that _the most consistent and regular linguistic system of a speech community is that of the basic vernacular learned before puberty_. The overt social correction supplied in the schoolroom can never be as regular or far-reaching as the unconscious efforts of "change from below" within the system. It is almost a matter of accident which words rise to the level of social consciousness and become overt stereotypes to be corrected. The _o_ of _coffee_, _chocolate_ and _door_ has moved to a very high _u_-like vowel in the vernacular of New York and Philadelphia, and it has finally become subject to a rather irregular correction process. The _o_ of _boy_ and _Lloyd_ is the same _o_, and it has moved to the same _u_-like vowel, but it is never corrected to a low vowel like the others.

Overt correction applied in the schoolroom is useful to the student in that it makes him aware of the distance between his speech and the standard language--in grammar and pronunciation. This correction cannot in itself teach him a new Type I rule: it most often gives him a variable, Type III rule which he will use in formal situations. At best he may achieve a semi-categorical Type II control of his language. There are many educated Negro speakers who were raised speaking non-standard Negro English, which has no third-singular _s_ and has obligatory negative concord as in _Nobody know nothin' about it_. In formal situations such speakers can supply all third-singular _s_'s, and avoid negative concord. But this requires continual monitoring of their own speech. In relaxed and casual circumstances, the rules of their basic vernacular will re-appear. It is certainly a good thing that this is the case, for no one is more lost than a speaker who can no longer use the non-standard vernacular of the neighborhood in which he was raised.

We may consider the important question as to whether any speaker ever acquires complete control of both standard English and a non-standard vernacular. So far, the answer to this question seems to be no. We have observed speakers who maintain perfect control of their original vernacular in casual speech, and have variable control of standard rules in their casual speech. Educated Negro speakers will show, even in their casual speech, far more third-singular *s* than the vernacular; their negative concord will be quite variable; in a word, the semi-categorical Type II rules of the non-standard dialect are now variable Type III rules for them. This does not stop them from communicating effectively with their old neighbord and friends. But it does mean that they are very poor informants on the fundamental rules of the vernacular. Teachers cannot obtain from themselves reliable information as what their original non-standard rules were. The knowledge of one system inevitably affects the other. The rules of standard English and its non-standard relatives are so similar that they are bound to interact. Languages and dialects are not so carefully partitioned from each other in the speakers' heads that the right hand does not know what the left hand is doing.

3.6. Social differences in verbal skills

There is ample evidence to show that social classes differ in their use of language, in ways that go beyond the use of stigmatized non-standard forms. A number of studies show that middle-class speakers use longer sentences, more subordinate clauses, more learned vocabulary, and take a less personal verbal viewpoint than working-class speakers. Our own studies of narratives of personal experience show that middle-class speakers interrupt their narratives much more often to give evaluative statements, often cast in an impersonal style. Middle-class speakers seem to excel in taking the viewpoint of the "generalized other."

There is also ample evidence to show that middle-class children do better on a wide range of school tasks, in both reading and mathematics, in achievement tests and non-verbal intelligence tests. In a word, they perform much better in school, and do better at acquiring a number of important skills which they will need in later life. Everyone would like to see working-class youth, and especially Negro and Puerto Rican youth in the American urban ghettos, do as well.

There is, however, no automatic connection between these two sets of findings. Seeing these two correlations, many educators have immediately concluded that a third correlation exists: that working-class children must be taught middle-class verbal habits, and be made to abandon the rules of their own dialect. Such a conclusion is without warrant: we do not know at present how much of the middle-class verbal pattern is functional, and contributes to their educational success, and how much is not.

The British social psychologist Basil Bernstein has devoted his attention to class differences in the use of language. He distinguishes a "restricted code" and an "elaborated code" which govern the selection of linguistic forms, and suggests that working-class speakers are confined to the former while middle class speakers have both. The chief characteristics of the "restricted code" may be summed up best in Bernstein's own language: speech is "fast, fluent, with reduced articulatory clues"; meanings are "discontinuous, dislocated, condensed and local"; there is a "low level of vocabulary and syntactic selection"; and most importantly, "the unique meaning of the person would tend to be implicit." (Bernstein 1966: 62).

Bernstein's description of the restricted code is a good picture of the casual speech which we rely upon for our view of the basic vernacular of a language, with both working-class and middle-class subjects. The over-all characteristic we are considering here is greater or lesser explicitness--and in the formulation used earlier, more or less attention paid to the monitoring of speech. This is the style which is commonly used among those who share a great deal of common experience. The most explicit formal style is used in addressing a public audience or in writing, where we presuppose the minimum amount of shared information and experience.

Clearly then, the verbal skills which characterize middle-class speakers are in the area which we have been calling "school language" in an informal sense, which speakers confined to a non-standard dialect plainly do not control. There is no reason to presuppose a deep semantic or logical difference between non-standard dialects and such an elaborated style. Some aspect of the formal speech of middle-class speakers may very well have value for the acquisition of knowledge and verbal problem solving.

But before we train working-class speakers to copy middle-class speech patterns wholesale, it is worth asking just which aspects of this style are functional for learning and which are matters of prestige and fashion. This question must be answered before we can design an effective teaching program, and unfortunately we have not yet begun to answer it.

Working-class speakers also excell at a wide range of verbal skills, including many not controlled by middle-class speakers. In the urban ghettos, we find a number of speech events which demand great ingenuity, originality and practice, such as the system of ritual insults known variously as _sounding_, _signifying_, _the dozens_, etc.; the display of occult knowledge sometimes known as _rifting_; the delivery, with subtle changes, of a large repertoire of oral epic poems known as _toasts_ or _jokes_; and many other forms of verbal expertise quite unknown to teachers and middle-class society in general. Most of these skills cannot be transferred wholesale to the school situation. But until now there has been no way of connecting excellence at the verbal activity of the vernacular culture with excellence in the verbal skills needed in school. It seems plain that our educational techniques should draw upon these non-standard vernacular skills to the better advantage of all concerned.

4. The Educational Implications of Sociolinguistic Study

The sociolinguistic principles discussed in the preceding section have been illustrated by many examples from non-standard dialects, and many educational implications have been suggested. In this section we will deal explicitly with a number of specific educational problems, and indicate the directions in which the solution may lie. We can approach these problems with a broader view of language than that provided by many linguistic textbooks which concentrate upon the description of an "idiolect", or the speech of one person at one short period of time. The grammars we are concerned with must be grammars of a language which is actually used for communication within the speech community.

We have sketched a view of such a grammar with many fixed Type I rules which show no variation; a number of semi-categorical Type II rules which are rarely violated within a given situation; and variable Type III rules which allow speakers to register both style (or functional variety) and social position (or cultural level). Most of these variable rules are available to the entire speech community, despite overt differences in speech behavior itself. The uniform direction in which such rules operate reflect a common set of sociolinguistic norms that govern the whole community. Some speakers are more sensitive than others to these norms and show sharper shifts in their own speech from style to style: women with lower-middle class backgrounds are the most extreme in this respect. Children do not participate fully in this sociolinguistic system at first, but gradually acquire a full range of styles and subjective reactions.

This view of the sociolinguistic system stresses the main outlines which we see in the United States. Recent research in England, and in India and in Norway show similar patterns operating. At the same time, the United States shows more continuity within its system than many of these other societies. Our system shows more continuous co-variation, and less strict co-occurrence rules than some other sociolinguistic situations. In the past, the tendency has been to over-emphasize such separate levels of linguistic behavior, and treat them as isolated systems, but in correcting this tendency we must not overlook whatever discontinuities and separation of levels are found in our own society.

There are discontinuities between middle-class and working-class speech in the American sociolinguistic pattern. But the chief breaks are between ethnic groups in our large cities. The English of Puerto Rican and Mexican Americans clearly shows the effect of the Spanish substratum, and is certainly a different sub-system from others. The language of Negro speakers in these ghetto areas is much more different from that of the surrounding white community than we normally find in dialect-contact situations. Before proceeding to examine educational problems, it will be helpful to look directly at the question of how great differences between English dialects can be.

4.1. How different are English dialects?

Not many years ago, linguists tended to emphasize the differences among the languages of the world, and assert that there was almost no limit to the ways in which languages could differ from each other. Dialectologists concentrated upon the features which differentiated their dialects--naturally, for these are the features which define their object of study.

However, the opposing trend is strong in linguistics today--there is a greater interest in the ways in which languages resemble each other, and how they carry out the same functions with similar rules. When we look at English dialects from this point of view, the differences do not appear very great. They are largely confined to superficial, rather low-level processes which have little effect upon meaning. Sometimes the dialect forms seem very different on the surface. For example, we find in non-standard Negro English such forms Didn't nobody see it; didn't nobody hear it. These appear to be question forms used as declaratives, which would be a truly radical difference from standard English. But closer investigation shows that this is merely an extension of the standard rule of literary English which gives us Never did he see it, or Nor did anybody see it: the negative is placed at the beginning of the sentence, along with the first member of the verb phrase, which contains the tense marker. This inversion of the tense marker and the subject is of course the same order as in questions, but it does not indicate a question with Never did he see it, any more than with Didn't nobody see it.

Dialects differ of course in phonological rules and such differences can produce a great deal of misunderstanding, but they do not register differences in the underlying semantic structure of the language. Dialects differ in foregrounding and re-arranging transformations such as that noted above. They also differ in their selection of redundant elements. Where standard English has two elements to signal a certain meaning, non-standard English often has one. For example, to signal the progressive we use both be and -ing as in He is going home;

the first element is most often dropped in non-standard Negro English: He goin' home. We also have two signals for the present perfect, have and -ed in I have lived here. Either the first or the second of these is usually deleted in the non-standard Negro form. The Negro vernacular does not have a possessive -s in attributive position: This is John mother in place of This is John's mother. But here the order of the two nouns does not allow any confusion. When the second noun is deleted, the possessive 's is always present. This is John's is the regular form, and This is John means something altogether different.

Conversely, the non-standard dialect often uses two elements where standard English uses one. Non-standard Negro English usually shows or either where the standard uses either, and and plus where the standard uses only and. Negative concord shows a reduplication of the negative where the standard uses only one negative element: Nobody heard anything can correspond to Nobody didn't hardly not hear nothing.

These are not logical or semantic differences, but rather different formal selections from a common repertoire of forms. There are a few cases where the non-standard language makes a grammatical distinction missing in the standard. The most noteworthy of these is the invariant be of non-standard Negro English which signals habitual or general state; this dialect can distinguish He be with us (meaning 'he is generally with us') from He is with us or He with us which can mean either general state or momentary conditions. On the other hand, several of the finer points of the standard tense system, such as the future perfect, may be missing in some non-standard dialects. But the main body of dialect differences do not affect the semantic or "deep structure" level. Furthermore, it seems increasingly plausible to write pan-dialectal grammars in which the differences between the various dialects will appear as stages in the evolution of the language as a whole--to some extent in a linear series, but also as a set of parallel and competing lines of development. Non-standard Negro English represents some radical departures from standard English, in that certain general rules of English are extended far beyond the environments and frequencies at which they operate in other dialects. Some of these extensions may be motivated by an underlying Creolized grammar common to Gullah, Trinidad, Jamaica and other dialects which are the product of complex contact situations. Or we may explain some of them by a process of "creolization" in the simplification of morphological forms and the development of a more analytic syntax. But no matter what historical explanation we give for some of these directions of development, we are plainly dealing with a dialect of English which is not, in the larger view, very different from other developments within the language.

4.2. The application of sociolinguistic research to the classroom

At present, we have only two kinds of studies of non-standard dialects: those carried out by linguists outside of school, and those carried out by psychologists and educational researchers within school. The teaching process itself has not yet been observed through the lenses provided by systematic sociolinguistic analysis. The information gathered by educators, no matter now useful it may be, has one major defect: it shows us only the results of the interaction of the underlying system, without showing us the systems themselves. The data on number of errors do not allow us to distinguish, as a rule between rare or variable behavior, and regular rule-governed behavior. We cannot connect the linguistic system of the students with their actual performance in class. Furthermore, much of this research does not evaluate the social factors which are controlling behavior in the test situation, and so there is always one major uncontrolled factor: we cannot distinguish the student's effort or attention to the task from his ability to perform it. Objective tests applied to large bodies of students are therefore of limited value at the moment in solving the problem of educational failure: we need direct observation of the teaching process, of what happens when a teacher with sociolinguistic system A comes into contact with a student who has system B. Before we can make such observations, we must know as much as possible about the particular students--especially whether they are members of the major peer groups of the community which use the non-standard vernacular in its most systematic form, or whether they are semi-isolated individuals.

As for the teacher, we must know how much he knows about the students' language, and what his own range of available dialects is. In the absence of such direct studies, we must draw upon indirect evidence to see how sociolinguistic research applies to educational problems.

4.3. Reading failure

The largest fact which we must face is that a very great number of Negro and Puero Rican youth are not learning to read well enough to use reading for other learning. There are, of course, reading problems in suburban areas. But when we interview youth in the suburban areas of New Jersey, Pennsylvania or Connecticut, we find that the bad readers would be good readers in the urban ghettos of New York and Philadelphia. Furthermore, many of the bad readers in the suburbs have special psychological or physical problems; but in the urban ghettos, it is the normal intelligent, well-adjusted, well-spoken boy who reads very badly. By "well-adjusted" is meant fitting in naturally to the social setting of the neighborhood--someone who is accepted and like by the majority of those on his block, and looked up to by many. The school records themselves do not distinguish between boys who are full members of the street culture and those who have been isolated and separated from it; but when we apply the knowledge we have gained from work in the community to analyzing these records, we find striking differences between the two groups. (See references in Bibliography). The isolated and semi-isolated individuals follow a general learning curve--on the average one or two years behind the norm in reading according to the Metropolitan Achievement tests. But the larger group of those who participate fully in the vernacular culture show no such learning pattern. They remain as a group at a low level of reading skill, with a ceiling at the fifth grade level, and year by year simply register greater distance between their reading and the norm. Many are suspended, are expelled, or drop out. Those who do remain appear to be making no progress--irrespective of the verbal skills which they display outside of school.

These findings lead us to conclude that the principal problem in reading failure is not that of dialect or grammatical differences, but rather a cultural conflict between the vernacular culture and the schoolroom. Progress in reading will depend upon changes in the social structure of the classroom as well as improvements in the technical methods of instruction. But some of this conflict proceeds from the pluralistic ignorance which prevails in the classroom: the teacher does not know that the students' rules are different from his own, and the students do not know just how the teacher's system differs from theirs.

The chief difficulty which we can now point to, therefore, is not so much in the dialect differences themselves as in the ignorance of those differences. If the teacher believes that the students' sound system matches his own, he is apt to teach reading in terms of the "sounds" of the letters. Many students are in fact confused when a teacher tells them that the *u* in *sure* has the *u*-sound, and the *o* in *shore* has the *o*-sound, when *sure* and *shore* sound exactly the same to them. The teacher may tell them that there is the *o*-sound in *Don* and the *aw*-sound in *dawn*, when in fact these two are identical for many students. The teacher would certainly profit from knowing at the outset, in the first grade, which sound distinctions are actually made by the students and which are not. It is an open choice if he then wishes to teach these distinctions, but it seems very unlikely that one would want to delay the teaching of reading until all of the children had learned all of the sound patterns to be taught.

Dialect differences need not interfere with the teaching of reading. The student may have fewer distinctions in his sound system than the teacher, but if we consider the large number of homonyms and silent letters in English as it is, it seems that little harm can be done by recognizing a few more. The *b* in *lamb* is silent, but it is important in learning to recognize and read this word. Similarly, the *-ed* in *rolled* may be pronounced or not, but is important to read and recognize it as a signal of the past tense.

More generally, teachers of reading must begin to make the *fundamental distinction between a mistake in reading and a difference in pronunciation*.

The number of corrections that can be made in oral reading is limited: since the student's task is to decipher the meaning from the items on the printed page, it seems beside the point to use this occasion to correct his pronunciation. For the teacher to make this distinction, it is necessary that he know what correct reading sounds like. If a Negro child reads *He always looked for trouble when he read the news* as *He a'way' look' fo' trouble when he read* [rhyme with *bed*] *de news*, the teacher should be able to judge that he is reading correctly. But if he actually says aloud *He always looked for trouble when he read the news*, yet rhymes *read* with *seed*, he is not reading correctly, and has to be stopped.

This test sentence illustrates one of the methods we have used to diagnose whether or not the student can actually read the -*ed* suffix. Whether or not he pronounces the -*ed*, one can tell by his pronunciation of the homograph *read* if he has transferred to past tense meaning from -*ed* to *read*. We find that most students do have the ability to transfer past tense meaning from adverbs, as in *Last month he read five books*, but not to derive this meaning from -*ed*. In that case, the teacher has the task of teaching the meaning of -*ed* carefully and explicitly from the beginning.

4.4. The importance of speech training

Given the existence of many mergers in the sound system of the non-standard dialect, the tendency of many teachers is to begin training the child to make the standard distinctions. Certainly this knowledge will be helpful sooner or later if the student wishes to control the standard spoken language. He will want to distinguish in his speech *fine* and *find*; *toe*, *toll* and *told*; *beer* and *bare*; and many other pairs which his vernacular does not distinguish. The crucial question is whether this training has any priority for the teaching of reading and writing. If so, it should clearly be done in the early grades; if not, it would seem something that is clearly secondary, and should be delayed until after the student has succeeded in learning to read and write, and has committed himself to the educational career in which spoken standard English will be most useful.

For most children, it seems that the teaching of speech and articulation is a secondary matter. On the basis of the considerations given above, it is clear that the most efficient strategy in the teaching of reading is to adjust one's instruction to the sound system of the child learning, rather than vice versa. No matter how efficient such articulatory training is it is extremely unlikely that it will produce anything more than a Type III rule in the first few years. If the reading rules are based upon variable rules of pronunciation which have just been taught, the child may well begin to assume (unconsciously) that the rules for reading are similar variable rules; this is surely what does happen for many bad readers. The correct strategy would seem to base reading rules upon the Type I rules of pronunciation which the child already has. Any letters which are subject to variable rules of articulation, like the -t in just, might be taught as spelling patterns, as independent of pronunciation as the b in lamb. The hope is that reading rules will eventually become Type I--rapid and automatic patterns of linguistic behavior well below the level of conscious analysis.

There will be children in every class who need training in certain sound patterns. In every peer group we have studied, we find some individuals who carry the basic rules of the vernacular to an extreme--simplifying almost all consonant clusters, for example, or dropping most final consonants; there are those who cannot distinguish pairs that are normally quite clear to the others in the group; for some, the tendency to use -k- in place of -t- is carried to an extreme, so that we get not only skreet for street (common enough among Negro speakers in South Carolina), but krip for trip. The teacher must be able to separate these cases from the others, and be sure that they receive the training in articulation and perception that will allow them to follow the same instruction as the rest of the class. But once again, it is important to distinguish such exceptional cases from the normal pattern. Some current testing methods are unreliable and heavily biased against Negro students, since for "normal" responses one is expected to distinguish pin and pen, Ruth and roof, find and fine. The normal Negro child can easily be diagnosed as a hearing or perceptual problem--it is not unusual for Negro children to be transferred to special classes on the basis of such tests.

4.5. The vocabulary of instruction

Practically nothing has been done in examining the vocabulary of instruction, to see where speakers of non-standard dialects might be at a disadvantage. We can point to a few obvious cases where non-standard speakers can expect trouble due to low level differences in the vocabularies of the standard and his own dialect. Let us consider the following hypothetical instruction given to a child: Show (with a pencil mark) whether the boy has a stick. This seems like simple language on the face of it. But it contains the complementizer whether which indicates the underlying question, and we have reason to believe that this form presents exceptional difficulties to speakers of non-standard Negro English.

Non-standard Negro English uses the system for embedded questions which prevails in the casual speech of most Southern dialects: the subject and auxiliary preserve the inverted order of the direct question and no complementizer is used. Thus Northern I asked him if he could go corresponds to Southern I asked him could he go. In repetition tests with fourteen-year-old Negro boys, members of the peer group we have known for several years, we find that many unhesitatingly repeat ask Albert if he knows how to play basketball as axe Albert do he know how to play basketball. On the other hand, if the test sentence was ask Albert whether he knows how to play basketball, most of the subjects had far more trouble. Many did not understand, asked for repetitions, or finally, after many emphatic repetitions of whether, produced sentences such as axe Albert . . whether do he know how to play basketball.

In the first case, the boys had no difficulty in understanding the standard English form. Though they do not use if in this construction, they know that it signals embedded questions, and without stopping at the surface forms they rapidly reproduced the meaning ask - Q - Albert knows how to play basketball in their own vernacular form. But whether was an unknown quantity in this sentence, and would clearly cause trouble in school in the same way.

This case illustrates the general principle that speakers of non-standard dialects have asymmetrical systems, in which they may perceive two different rules equally well, but produce by only one route.

But there are other items in standard English which are outside of their comprehension, and it would be desirable to map these as carefully as possible--especially if they are involved with the language of instruction.

4.6. Is non-standard English illogical?

In the light of the preceding sections, it may seem odd to raise this question. Despite the obvious surface differences between standard and non-standard, they are both based upon the same deep structures, and are used to convey the same underlying logical propositions. From a linguistic point of view, this seems well established. But there are some educational program which have been put forward recently based upon the opposite premises, and it seems appropriate to examine them in detail.

The program designed by Carl Bereiter and his associates is based upon the explicit assumption that "the language of culturally deprived children...is not merely an underdeveloped version of standard English, but is a basically non-logical mode of expressive behavior." This quotation is taken from page 113 of an article on "An Academically Oriented Pre-School" which describes a program of training pre-school children to speak in fully explicit formal language (in Hechinger 1966, pp. 105-137). Bereiter believes that the goal of language training must be that of teaching the culturally deprived child a different language, and proceeding "as if the children had no language at all." Because this program resembles those suggested by many linguists for using the methods of second-language teaching, it has a superficial similarity to the ideas of those who wish to avoid condemning the native vernacular of the children, but treat it as simply "different" from standard English. Furthermore, Bereiter attributes the view quoted above to Bernstein, whose ideas are being followed by many other researchers. An examination of the examples which Bereiter gives, and his program, shows that his approach represents a misinterpretation of Bernstein's conception of the restricted code, and a profound misunderstanding of the nature of language.

It is reported that Bereiter's pre-school children have only a "primitive notion of the structure of language." Their communications were by gesture, "by single words", "or a series of badly connected words or phrases". It is said that they could not give simple directions such as "*Give me the book*", or even repeat such sentences. They could not ask questions. Finally, it is said that "without exaggerating..these four-year-olds could make no statements of any kind." (Bereiter 1966:114).

The behavior reported for these four-year-olds does not resemble the behavior of any four-year-old children with whom we have worked, or observed in the video-tapes of pre-school classes, even though our children are drawn from ghetto areas larger and more disadvantaged than the Urbana area studied by Bereiter. When we examine the examples of their language, it becomes apparent that this description is more an account of the investigator's attitude towards the non-standard dialect than a report of their verbal and logical capacities. The "badly connected words and phrases" are exemplified by *They mine* and *Me got juice*. It has already been pointed out that non-standard Negro English shows many low-level phonetic processes which make the surface forms look quite different from standard English. The deletion of the copula is one that has been studied in some detail: here the deletion of *are* is the result of a series of contraction and reduction rules which are present in the speech of everyone, in this case applied in an environment where even white adults in the South may use them. Thus a clerk in a North Carolina grocery store says, "Cucumbers? We out of them." But even if there were no copula present in *They mine*, there is no reason to think that these words are illogically or badly connected. Many languages, such as Hebrew, Hungarian or Russian have no present copula, and such constructions are quite standard. In *any* language, the copula appears to be a superficial element which has no relation to the semantic content or "deep structure" of the sentence. Therefore it should be clear that when we teach the child to say *They're mine* or *They are mine*, we are simply teaching him to pronounce clearly a formal feature of the standard language: we are not teaching him anything about the logical relations between *they* and *mine*. The case of *Me got juice* shows that the child has not mastered the formal alternation of *I* and *me*--not at all uncommon at this age. No one would suggest that the child does not understand the logical connection between himself, the getting and the juice: that he thinks that in fact the *juice* got *him*!

The formal training given by Bereiter and his associates is intended to supply the logic which they believe is missing. All questions asked of the child must be answered explicitly, without any deletion or ellipsis. The question, "Where is the squirrel?" must be answered "The squirrel is in the tree", and not "he is in the tree" or "In the tree". It is argued that only the full form represents a logical statement.

It was pointed out in section 2 that the child who comes to school is already in possession of an extremely complex set of linguistic rules--more complex than any linguist is now able to describe. A child may intend to say I saw the squirrel and add to this John saw the squirrel. He can simply conjoin the two, giving I saw the squirrel and John saw the squirrel. But he can reduce this awkward construction by four steps, which might be represented informally by the following instructions:

(1) Delete identical predicate except for tense marker, giving I saw the squirrel and John [past].

(2) Supply the pro-predicate do in place of the deleted phrase, giving I saw the squirrel and John [past] do.

(3) Combine [past] and do to yield did: I saw the squirrel and John did.

(4) Add an obligatory too giving I saw the squirrel and John did too.

If we ask a child a question such as "Did you take a cookie without asking?" we may get an elliptical response: "John did too!" To produce the short form, John did too, the child needs competence in all of the syntactic apparatus outlined above. In fact, children do not make such elliptical responses until they have learned to make the full forms. In other words, the elliptical response presupposes the grammatical rules of the full form. Questions can be answered efficiently by the rules of ellipsis, but only when the syntax of the questions is understood. Where is the squirrel? can be answered with In the tree only if the child has grasped the syntax of Where is the squirrel? And the rules which give us Where is the squirrel? are necessarily more complex than those which yield The squirrel is in the tree. They require the placing of the wh-question on the locative adverb, the attraction of wh- to the beginning of the sentence, and the reversal of subject and first element of the verb phrase.

Explicit answers may have some value in the schoolroom. They may indeed be useful in bringing to the child's conscious attention the underlying rules of his own language. But to do so means teaching the rule of ellipsis by having the child alternate between full and elliptical forms:

Are you hungry? Yes, I'm hungry.
Yes, I am.
Yes.

More importantly, it is essential not to confuse logic with explicitness. If middle-class language is more detailed, more overtly articulated than working-class speech, we may wish to make note of this face and use it; but to claim that the difference between standard and working-class style is that between logic and emotion does not fit with the linguistic facts, and it is hard to believe that students will not realize this themselves sooner or later.

It may seem at first glance that the program put forward by Bereiter and his associates can only be wrong in putting more stress than is necessary on explicitness. However, an understanding of the sociolinguistic factors at work in the schoolroom will indicate how negative the result may be. The importance of sociolinguistic norms cannot be overestimated: most people hear other people's speech, and their own, through a screen of preconceptions and stereotypes. If the teacher hears the children through the theoretical apparatus provided by Bereiter and his associates, he will hear the pre-logical, primitive mode of expression that he has been led to expect. The monosyllabic responses of the child will be heard as an index of the child's linguistic capacity. When we read that the children did not know enough to look at the book in order to answer the question, "Is the book on the table?" we realize that the investigator is viewing the child's behavior through a very special set of lenses.

The monosyllabic minimal responses described by Bereiter can be obtained in any interview with children or adults. In our approach to linguistic investigation, we are continually forced to answer the question, "Why does anyone say anything?" One can observe people's competence at answering questions, and also their ability not to answer.

Children in particular are continually faced with hostile and aggressive situations, in which anything that they say can, literally, be held against them. There are a whole series of techniques which children use to avoid committing themselves, especially when faced with test questions to which the answers are obviously known in advance. One is a monosyllable with a rising intonation which can be read as "I hope that satisfies you" or "Is that the answer you are looking for?" Another is the refusal to look where the adult obviously wants him to look. All of these are substitutes for direct refusal, which is not permitted.

We have records of a testing program which was designed to measure the children's verbal capacity, but which in fact elicited such defensive reactions from hundreds of children in the early grades. The adult interviewer, alone with the child, places a block or a toy on the table and says, "Tell me everything you can about this!" The tapes which follow contain twenty seconds of silence for every second of speech. Sociolinguistic investigators have paid a great deal of attention to techniques which will overcome and eliminate such defensive postures, since their object is to obtain a record of the subjects' natural speech. Conversely, a great deal of data has been accumulated on the factors which repress language, and the school test situation combined most of them: an adult face-to-face with a child, questions with known answers, a permanent record to be used for some purpose outside the child's control, and isolation from the peers who provoke and control normal speech. If we add to this a hostile and negative attitude of the interviewer towards the child's speech, it is clear that a minimum of verbal production will be obtained.

One can force the issue by demanding full and explicit statements from children, and repressing their own vernacular forms. But it seems certain that one does so only at the cost of sharpening the cultural conflict which already exists. The resistance to the school situation on the part of the vernacular speakers can be repressed in the early grades, but it is very likely that it will return with renewed vigor in the fourth and fifth grades, with damaging results to the educational process.

4.7. Should the vernacular be used in primers?

A number of suggestions have been made that the non-standard vernacular be used in the early grades for teaching reading. There have been many reports of success in having children read their own words, after the teacher has written down stories told by the children themselves. Given the observations of cultural conflict in the classroom which have been made in many cities, it seems natural to pursue this possibility. There are many problems in deciding how much of the superficial detail of the dialect should be represented in the orthography; that is, should we represent the standard He told me to do it first as He tole me to do it firs? It is not clear what would be gained by eliminating consonants which are probably present in the underlying forms used by children. On the other hand, it would seem logical to begin with invariant have, was and do in He have it, They was here and He be doin' it, and then to introduce the standard distinction explicitly later along with the third-person singular s. We can expect a certain amount of resistance from the adult community, since it is a firm conviction of most adults that the basic vernacular is not suitable for school language, especially for reading and writing. But if this tactic does prove successful in obtaining greater motivation, stronger interest, and greater success in the early years, such opposition must certainly be overcome.

4.8. Modes of mitigation and politeness

We are only beginning to describe the rules for the use of language, but in this area we can observe many differences between non-standard and standard speakers. The non-standard speaker is undoubtedly handicapped in many ways by his lack of control over mitigating forms which are more highly developed in middle-class and school language. These forms are used to avoid conflict between individuals who meet in some kind of face-to-face encounter. The child may not know the mitigating ways of disagreeing with the teacher which make such disagreement acceptable in the school situation. It is not uncommon for Negro children to simply accuse the teacher of lying where middle-class white children might say, "There's another way of looking at it." Faced with the statement, "You a lie!", the teacher usually finds it necessary to react forcefully. After one or two such confrontations, most students learn to say nothing. But some continue to object without learning the means of doing so without conflict. We have in the school records of boys we have studied many cases where they have been reprimanded, even demoted, for their lack of knowledge of mitigating forms of politeness. For one of these boys, who can be described as a verbal leader of his subgroup, we find such entries as the following:

Nov 63	Frequently comes to school without a tie... . . He frequently calls out answer. When told not to call out he made an expression of disgust. He then refused to accept the rexographed sheet the teacher gave to the class.
Nov 63	When asked to re-write a composition he adamantly refused. He said, "I will not." He doesn't practice any self control.
Dec 63	Was fighting with another boy in class today...
Sep 66	*F* in citizenship.
May 67	Mother has been in touch with school regarding son's truancy.

This record can be interpreted in several ways. It is possible that he does not care at all about school, and is simply expressing his defiance for the system. It is just as hard for us to interpret the school record by itself as it is for the teacher to deal with the student in this formal situation without any knowledge of the vernacular culture.

When we listen to the same fourteen-year-old boy speaking outside of school, we can see that he has a natural command of language, and has no difficulty in expressing his ideas. The following quotations are taken from a session recorded with a Negro field worker, and one of the speaker's best friends. The boy whose school record is given above is *Junior*; the friend is *Ronald*. First of all, it is apparent that Junior does have strong feelings of resentment against the school and white society.

Junior: Like I'ma tell you the truth. They jus' want everythin' taken away from us. . . Who do we work for? Whities! Who do we go to school for? Whities! Who's our teachers? Whities!

. . . . .

IVer: If the whitey's not different from you, how come he has everything?

Ronald: They don't have everything.

Junior: Yes they do!

It is important to note here that Junior and Ronald are members of the Jets, a group which is quite indifferent and even hostile to black nationalism and the Muslim religion. The resentment expressed here is a product of Junior's own thinking--the result of his own experience. Despite his antagonism towards the dominant white society, he has retained a strong sense of realism in his evaluation of it. An argument with Ronald as to whether high school diplomas are necessary.

Ronald: And I'm 'onna tell you; I'm onna say *why* what they say you have to have a high school diploma. Some whitey's probably ain't got a high school diploma, and he still go out to work. My father ain't got a high school diploma.

Junior: Your father ain't no whitey, is he?

Ronald: No, but he has no high school diploma, but he go out there and work, right?

Junior: O.K.! . . But. . I'ma tell you, you're wrong in a *way*--cause ev'ry whitey--ev'ry whitey, if they out o' school, they went through *high* school. If they didn't go to college they went through *high* school. If the whities didn't go through high school, how come they got everything?. . . 'Cause they had the *knowledge*.

It is apparent here that Junior is a much better speaker than Ronald. In complex arguments of this sort, Ronald's syntax gets him into problems like the double *but* clauses, or the unsolved puzzle of his first sentence. Junior has no difficulty expressing his ideas. Furthermore, he has the ability to put one argument on top of another which is characteristic of those who win verbal contests.

Junior: If you--if you was in a high school--right? Why do people graduate?

Ronald: 'Cause they try hard to grad--'cause they *want* to graduate.

Junior: 'Cause they *learn*. . 'cause they *learn*. If they didn't learn, and they just stood around, they wouldn't have everything. . . 'Cause you got to *work* to get to high school, you got to *work* to get from elementary to junior high. . .

In this dialogue, Junior seems to express very well the values of middle-class society. He shows a full cognitive awareness of the importance of education. It comes as something of a shock then to learn that at the time of this interview he was in the eighth grade and his reading score was 4.6--more than three years behind grade. And the disciplinary record cited above indicates that he is very unlikely to be graduating from high school himself. Note that the *they* of *they learn* seems at first reading to refer to a very general *people* who graduate; it seems to be an inclusive rather than an exclusive *they*. But when Junior says "*they* wouldn't have everything..." it is clear that he is not including himself among the people who graduate.

Is there any internal evidence within this record as to why Junior is not learning to read--why he is not taking advantage of the school system to get what he so plainly wants? It is obviously not a question of his verbal intelligence. A reading of disciplinary events shows serious sources of conflict between him and his teachers which are preventing him from using his intelligence for the acquisition of knowledge. Each of these reported incidents was the occasion for an interruption in his school work, a violent confrontation with authority. The teachers report that he "calls out answers," and "doesn't practice any self control." The kind of skills which Junior is lacking appear to be those verbal routines of mitigation which would make it possible for him to object and refuse without a major confrontation. Of course the record reflects the teachers' subjective impressions rather than what actually happened, but we can see enough to reconstruct the kind of events involved, and isolate the problems for further study. Note that Junior's disciplinary record begins in the fifth grade, when he was eleven. One exchange between him and the teacher might have been something like this:

Teacher: Junior, this is very sloppy work.
Junior: No it isn't!
Teacher: Now you take that composition and write it over again!
Junior: I will not!

The sentence "I will not" was striking enough to be quoted in the teacher's report. It is an elliptical response, short for "I will not write that composition over again," but it is certainly not illogical. We hear a good deal about the faults of non-standard language, but it has many strong points among which brevity and clarity may be mentioned. The problem with with "I will not" is that it is altogether too clear: it lacks the verbal devices which could have been used to make the objection, and perhaps win the argument. Instead, the direct refusal without mitigation led to the end of the verbal exchange ("You go right down to the office...")

To show what Junior did not do, we have to write the rules for commands, and for refusing commands, which prevail for standard English and the middle-class society in which that language is embedded. Commands and refusals are actions; statements, questions and imperatives are linguistic categories--things that are said, rather than things that are done. The rules we need will show how things are done with words, and how one interprets these utterances as actions: in other words, relating what is done to what is said and what is said to what is done. This area might be called "discourse analysis"; it is not well known or developed. Linguistic theory is not rich enough to write such rules, for we have to take into account such sociological categories as social roles, rights and obligations. What small progress has been made in this area is the work of sociologists who are investigating the Type I rules which lie behind every day "common sense" behavior.

Some of our own work in this field has touched on commands, so that it is possible to indicate what Junior might have done besides answering "I will not." Commands are requests from a person A to a person B to carry out some action X under conditions C_0, C_1. . C_n. This is the explicit form of a command. But every command has a number of preconditions. If the receiver B is to hear the command as valid (or a "serious" command), it is necessary that he believe that the originator A believes four things: that under conditions $C_0 \ldots C_n$,

a. X should be done (both in general and at the time)

b. B has the obligation to do X

c. B has the ability to do X

d. A has the right to command B to do X

These four pre-conditions are not only part of the process of judging and reacting to a command. They are also used in indirect ways of making the command or request. Either a statement or a question about any of these four pre-conditions can stand for and be heard as the command itself. Thus the teacher could have said

a. This has to be done over. or
Shouldn't this be done over?

b. You'll have to do this over. or
Don't you have to do neater work than this?

c. You can do better than this. or
Don't you think you can do neater work than this?

d. It's my job to get you to do better work than this. or
Can I ask you to do this over?

Some of these forms are heard as forceful requests, but many are heard as mitigated and very polite forms, even more than "Would you please...?" Furthermore, not only are these pre-conditions used in making requests, but they are also utilized for mitigated forms of refusal. Denials of any of these pre-conditions, or questions about them, will serve the same purpose as "I will not" as far as the activity of refusing is concerned. Thus Junior could have said:

a. I don't think it's sloppy enough to do over. or
It's not that sloppy, is it?

b. I'm not supposed to be doing penmanship today. or
If it's right it doesn't have to be pretty, does it?

c. I sprained my wrist and I can't write good. or
That's the best I've done so far, isn't it?

d. You have no right to tell me that. or
Are you telling me to do everything twice?

Except for the last two forms, which are extremely challenging, these kinds of refusals leave the door open for further discussion.

They are heard as partial refusals, in the sense that it is clear that Junior will not re-write the composition unless the teacher repeats the command. But most importantly, they are deniable refusals. If someone is accused of refusing a command by such forms, he is entitled to say, "I didn't refuse, I was only..." Furthermore, if the teacher wants to retreat, he too can say that Junior did not refuse, and avoid the loss of face involved in accepting a refusal. There are thus many adult ways of doing business in this situation. But the form "I will not" stands in contrast to all of these, and therefore signals an unwillingness to use the mitigated forms; it thus represents a direct challenge to the authority of the teacher. Perhaps Junior was angry and wanted to precipitate a crisis: the question is, did this eleven-year-old have the skills to avoid that crisis if he wanted to?

It is not suggested that all of these indirect, mitigating forms be taught in school. Much of this apparatus may be expendable, just as much of the elaboration of formal syntax may be a matter of style. These interactions must be studied to isolate the areas of conflict which proceed from ignorance on both sides. It is not entirely clear that all of the adjustment must be on the part of the non-standard language and the vernacular culture.

5. Sociolinguistic Research within the School

At the beginning of section 4, it was pointed out that very little sociolinguistic research has been done in the school setting. By sociolinguistic research is meant the observation and analysis of linguistic behavior in its social setting, with full concern for the social factors which affect it. Much of this work will be done by teachers and educators who are more familiar with the classroom than linguists are, and who have the kind of regular contact with the problems which is needed. In this section, some of the main techniques for studying non-standard language will be mentioned briefly, with an indication of their possible application in schools. We will be particularly concerned with the possibility that research of this nature will become a regular part of procedure in many schools, since the most efficient use of teaching materials will always presuppose the teacher's knowledge of the language of students in his class.

The most important part of any research is that its purpose be well defined. But such a definition need not take the form of an elaborate hypothesis to be "confirmed" or "disconfirmed." Research in the school can reasonably hope for useful information in three main areas:

(1) What is the set of contrasting vowels and consonants used by children to distinguish different words, in both perception and production?

(2) What non-standard rules of grammar are used by children in this school, and how firmly are these rules established?

(3) What are the main differences between the speech used outside of school among peers, and that used in the classroom?

There are many other research problems which need to be attacked by work within the classroom--problems closely involved with methods of instruction. But any such research must depend upon a good description of the language of children in that particular school, just as the proper use of standard texts and teaching methods depends upon such knowledge. That is not to say that the dialects of children in every school are so different that special teaching methods are needed--but rather that one must know what non-standard dialects are used in a particular area, and how strongly they are entrenched. In some communities, non-standard dialects are used by only a small minority of speakers, and the rest follow patterns much closer to the standard. In other communities, the non-standard dialects represent the basic vernacular of over half the students, and strongly influence the rest. Such information must be the fundamental input to any sound program for teaching the reading, writing and speaking of standard English.

5.1. The use of dialect literature

One of the first sources of information one can turn to is the body of literature written in the non-standard dialect in question. Today we have a great many novels and plays which reflect the language of the urban ghettos rather faithfully in some respects, and in every area there is a local literature which will give the teacher some printed matter to examine. Some of this material is quite wide of the mark, but the judgment of critics most familiar with the dialect in question can usually be obtained.

All of this literature has one general characteristic, which proceeds from the properties of sociolinguistic norms discussed in section 3. Behavior which is variable in actual speech becomes stereotyped in novels and plays, so that forms which occur 30-40% of the time will occur 100% of the time in the writer's treatment. There may be two reasons for this tendency: (a) the author wants to heighten or enrich the local flavor of speech, and (b) the author hears this "marked" behavior as invariant when in fact it is variable. The two reasons actually coincide, since it can be stated more simply that people perceive speech in categorical terms, even though they behave in accordance with variable rules, and the novelists practice reflects his perception and his intention. On the other hand, there will be unnoticed inconsistencies where the author's own grammar appears without his realizing it. One can therefore use dialect literature as a good indication that a certain form does occur, and that it has a social value value great enough for it to be noticed by the author. It cannot be used for any indication of relative frequency, or for proof that certain standard forms do in fact occur.

Dialect literature can also be used to test the students' ability to read material closer to their vernacular than the standard English of the primers. Here there is no warranty that in fact this material is closer to the students' language. But a comparison of certain grammatical forms with the compositions or oral presentations of the students may give the teacher some indication. In general, one might compare

a. Forms of agreement of the verbs be, have, do, say.

b. Forms of the possessive: attributive nouns and pronouns.

c. The points where negative concord occurs--especially whether the negative appears with both subject indefinites in the pre-verbal position as in Nobody don't know.

d. The duplication of place adverbs, as in I wanna get down back on that.

These are a few of the elements that are particularly characteristic of local variations in non-standard dialects, and may serve as helpful signals in judging the appropriateness of dialect literature.

5.2. Face-to-face interviews

Throughout this discussion, the limitations of individual interviews have been stressed, and especially the fact that the formal environment produces more careful speech than one might want. At the same time, individual interviews will always be the best means of obtaining a large sample of any one person's speech, with good sound and complete information on his background. If the same individual is interviewed in three or four successive years, these records will serve as very useful comparisons of the effect of the teaching process, and the way in which his careful speech patterns have developed. Certain topics are useful in breaking down the constraints of the interview situation; these will vary depending upon the sex and the age of the student, as well as his social background. In any case, this effect will be a minor one if the interview is carried on in a school setting by a person connected with the school, so that the interviews should be taken as examples of careful speech.

Perhaps the best way of ensuring a departure from the most careful and restrained style is to have a close friends of the subject present. Even if this disrupts the interview situation somewhat, it will lead to exchanges and displays of local humor that will break the pattern of question and answer. Topics that are intensely local will often be most useful. For the general kind of questions that have been effective in community research, see some of the references in the bibliography under this heading.

Most important of all is the question of securing good sound in tape recording. A great deal of research has been done which is almost useless for further analysis because the quality of the recordings was so poor. Good sound is even more important for the analysis of grammar than for the study of sound patterns. This is because the sound pattern of a speaker can be determined from the stressed, clear utterances that occur quite frequently. But many grammatical particles of great importance are reduced to small bits of noise, single consonants or reduced vowels, and each sentence becomes quite important. Certain grammatical forms are so rare that they may occur only once in an entire program of interviewing, and it is more than tragic if this evidence is lost through poor technique in recording. The important factor to maximize good recording of speech is the distance between the subject's mouth and the microphone. This should be as short as possible--preferably less than ten inches. Lavaliere microphones which hang around the subject's neck are ideal, since they maintain a constant distance and do not remind the speaker that he is being recorded. Too much care cannot be given to constant testing and improving of recording techniques, for it is surprisingly difficult to maintain a high level of data input in the face of the numerous factors which can interfere with good recording.

5.3. Group sessions

The best data on the vernacular can be obtained only in group sessions, where speech is controlled and provoked by the same factors which operate in every-day life. The group must of course not be selected by the investigator, but rather by the subjects themselves. The writer is currently carrying out a study of the fifth grade in a Pennsylvania school, by means of a series of group sessions with boys and girls during and noon hour, and after school. When a natural grouping is observed in the cafeteria or on the playground, it is not too difficult to locate the central figure. He is then asked to choose three others to talk together in a place which is neither a part of the usual schoolroom procedures, nor accessible to anyone and everyone. The quality of interaction in such group sessions is much more intense and excited than with groups put together by an outsider. As the study progresses, one obtains other information on personal relations within the school which makes it possible to use other methods.

The technique of recording group sessions is difficult with the best equipment. If only one or two microphones are available, it is best to obtain good sound from a few speakers rather than poor sound from all. It will then be possible to know who is speaking--an important point, for a microphone located in the center of the group is almost useless in this respect.

In all interviewing situations, there is a certain amount of minimal demographic data which is needed: the age, sex, geographic background, ethnic group, and parents' occupations of the speakers. If such data are to be available for later analysis, they should be recorded in interview reports, in writing, at the time of the interview, together with an account of the context of the interview and a list of others present. By geographic background is meant the places where the subject lived between the ages of four and thirteen.

5.4. Formal tests

In individual interviews, group sessions, or in formal classroom situations, there are a number of formal tests which can be administered to yield useful information on the language of the students. Naturally, this material will show formal style, but such data are valuable in their own right. Furthermore, there are a great many linguistic elements which are quite constant in such situations--which do not shift from one style to another, and these may be quite important for immediate school problems as well as general linguistic analysis. First, it is helpful to have a standard reading, which embodies most of the grammatical and phonological features of interest. Secondly, a list of isolated words will give a great deal of information in a very short space, though it must be born in mind that the style for reading such word lists is even more formal than reading connected texts. Third, and perhaps most important, is a list of minimal pairs which will show if the speaker distinguishes classes of words with certain sounds. For example, the distinction between *i* and *e* before nasals can be tested by having the subject read *pin* - *pen*, *gem* - *Jim*, and they say aloud whether or not these words sound the same to him. In very doubtful cases, one can have one student say the words, and the other judge which is which.

It may be helpful here to give a list of the principal sound contrasts which may vary in American dialects and which should be taken into account in the teaching of reading. Minimal pairs in the ten most important areas are listed below; for each sub-type, at least two examples are given. In some cases, the pairs are near-minimal, and the question to be asked is whether or not they rhyme. In most cases, a much longer list can easily be made up for extended tests. It should be noted that for most of these, there is no social value attached to any difference in sound patterns. The information is needed for effective teaching of reading and writing, but it is not necessarily relevant to any program training in speech.

1. Short o and long open o. This is the only "unconditioned" sound change taking place in American English--that is, the two vowels are merging in every environment regardless of the following consonant. However, the advancing merger does tend to run ahead before nasals.

cot ~ caught
hock ~ hawk
God ~ gaud
ma ~ maw

2. Vowels before r.

beer ~ bare
steer ~ stair

lure ~ lore
moor ~ more

for ~ far
or ~ are

fire ~ far
tire ~ tar

four ~ for
hoarse ~ horse
mourning~morning

Mary ~ merry
fairy ~ ferry

merry ~ marry
Kerry ~ carry

merry ~ Murray
ferry ~ furry

during ~ mooring (rhyme?)
jury ~ Jewry

nearer ~ mirror (rhyme?)
spirit ~ spear it

3. Vowels before -l

tell ~ tail
fell ~ fail

Nelly ~ daily (rhyme?)
selling ~ sailing

oil ~ all
boil ~ ball

4. Vowels before nasals

pin ~ pen
since ~ sense

think ~ thank
clink ~ clank

dawn ~ Don
yawn ~ yon

done ~ Don
run ~ Ron

hum ~ home
shun ~ shone

5. Diphthongs /ay/and aw/

side ~ sod
right ~ rot

proud ~ prod
rout ~ rot

6. Loss of -r. When final and pre-consonantal -r is vocalized, the resulting glide or "schwa" appears as simply a long vowel in the cases given here. The words spelling with r may or may not have a different vowel quality.

source ~ sauce
lore ~ law

guard ~ God
par ~ pa

7. Loss of -l. A situation similar to that with -r affects words with final l, except that the glide tends to disappear after the back rounded vowels as shown here.

too ~ tool
rue ~ rule

go ~ goal
so ~ soul

8. Voiceless *w*

which ~ witch
whale ~ wail

9. -*th* and -*f*

death ~ deaf
Ruth ~ roof

breathe ~ eve (rhyme?)
bathe ~ rave (rhyme?)

10. Consonant clusters.

pass ~ past
mess ~ mist

fine ~ find
loan ~ loaned

bowl ~ bold
feel ~ field

mass ~ mask
ass ~ ask

gas ~ gasp
miss ~ lisp (rhyme?)

riff ~ rift
laugh ~ laughed

One method of using printed texts to get slightly less formal speech is that used by Levine and Crockett in their study of Hillsboro, North Carolina. The word to be observed is put in a sentence with a blank that the speaker is supposed to fill in, such as "I use a pen to write my __________." The speaker's attention is concentrated on the blank, and his pronunciation of *pen* thus receives much less attention than when he is reading it in a list of words, or even in a continuous text.

5.5. *Perception tests* may be called for whenever it is suspected that a particular distinction between words is marginal or beyond the students' competence. These are usually carried out in an ABX context. The subject hears three words: A and B are two different items and his task is to say whether the third item, X, is more like A or more like B. A simpler set of instructions is simply to say which of the three is different, but this may be a more difficult perceptual task.

5.6. Repetition tests are the most useful means of getting at the grammatical competence of children. Such tests are surprisingly useful with adolescents, though traditionally they have been used with young children. In general, a speaker has great difficulty in remembering and repeating back sentences which follow rules outside of his grammar. Several of the results of such tests have been cited in this paper. It is best to control for length by having some clearly grammatical sentences such as Anybody can't do that. For each sentence which follows a rule of the non-standard dialect, there should be a corresponding sentence following the rule of the standard language.

5.7. Classroom observation

So far, we have been speaking of techniques which are identical with those used outside of school, within the speech community. The most important kinds of observation will be those made during the actual process of teaching. There are a number of studies now being carried out with video tape recorders in which this interaction is studied directly. But in general, it would seem that the one activity most subject to recording and study is oral reading. If the microphone is placed around the student's neck as he reads, we will get approximately the same record of the teacher's corrections as the student himself does. Such recordings will be exceptionally valuable for analyzing the process of learning to read in the classroom situation. There are undoubtedly many other techniques for studying classroom interaction which might be devised. But the basic problem is that there is too much data available to the observer, and we do not know yet which is most critical for the study of sociolinguistic interaction.

5.8. Observation outside the classroom

For the systematic study of the learning process, it seems essential that we be able to interpret classroom behavior against the background of peer group behavior away from the school. This data cannot be gathered by the teacher himself, since he is plainly marked as a school figure wherever he appears. A few teachers may have the ability to enter completely into a different social role, but such cases would certainly be exceptional. The best possibility to obtain such data is through the help of tutor aides, or classroom intermediaries--assistants from the community who have been called upon in many communities to mediate between the vernacular culture and the schoolroom. In many schools there are older boys who tutor younger ones, sometimes with great success. Such an assistant would be in a difficult position if he reported without discrimination everything that happened outside of the classroom; research would soon be equivalent to spying, at least in the students' eyes. But observations confined to verbal behavior may be entirely in order: who are the best speakers, who talks the most, who tells jokes, what are the topics of local interest, who doesn't talk at all in the group but talks a lot by himself--all these are matters in the public domain, and of exceptional value in the interpretation of schoolroom performance.

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The classic account of the historical development of the idea of "correct English" is that of Sterling A. Leonard, *The Doctrine of Correctness in English Usage*, 1700-1800 (Madison, Wis.: 1929). The history of unsuccessful efforts to establish formal methods of controlling American English is given in A. W. Read, "American Projects for an Academy to Regulate Speech", *PMLA* 51:1141-1179, 1936. A number of relevant articles on "Linguistics and Usage" are in H. B. Allen, *Readings in Applied English Linguistics* (2nd edition, Appleton Century: New York 1964) pp. 271-342.

2. The nature of language

The word "linguistics" in American education once meant the ideas of Bloomfield and his successors: Fries, Gleason, Hockett, Hill. The general approach to linguistic structure given here is that of Noam Chomsky, who sharply critized these "American structuralists" as taking much too superficial a view of language structure, and turning away from the important questions asked in traditional grammar. A recent and readable statement of Chomsky's own viewpoint is "Topics in the Theory of Generative Grammar" in T. Sebeok, (ed) *Current Trends in Linguistics, 3: Linguistic Theory*. (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1966). A recent introductory college textbook based on Chomsky's ideas is R. W. Langacker, *Language and its Structure*, New York, Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1967. A clear view of the generative approach to English syntax, written for a wide range of readers, is Roderick Jacobs and Peter Rosenbaum (eds.), *English Transformational Grammar*, New York: Blaisdell, 1968. The distinction between surface structure and deep structure is presented by P. Postal, "Underlying and Superficial Linguistic Structure", *Harvard Educational Review* 34:246-266, 1964. The relation of this general approach to sound patterns for reading is given in Noam Chomsky, "Phonology and Reading" to appear in H. Levin, (ed.) *Basic Studies in Reading*, (Ithaca, Cornell University Press).

3. Some sociolinguistic principles

The data upon which this section is based is found in a number of recent studies of speech communities by Gumperz, Lambert, Labov, Shuy, Levine and Crockett, and Fishman. Published reports of this work include:

Fishman, Joshua. "Bilingualism in the Barrio". Final Report, Contract No. OEC-1-7-062817-0297. Washington, D:C:, Dept. of H. E. W.; Office of Education, 1968.

Gumperz, John J. "On the Linguistic Markers of Bilingual Communication". In John Macnamara (ed.), *Problems of Bilingualism*, (*The Journal of Social Issues*, Vol. 23, No. 2, April 1967), pp. 48-57.

Labov, William D. *The Social Stratification of English in New York City*. Washington, D. C.: Center for Applied Linguistics, 1966.

-----. "Variation in Language". To appear in Reed, Carroll (ed.) *The Learning of Language*. (Champaign, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English).

-----. "Stages in the Acquisition of Standard English". In Shuy, Roger (ed.), *Social Dialects and Language Learning*, pp. 77-104. (Champaign, Ill: National Council of Teachers of English, 1964).

Gumperz, John J. "Linguistic and Social Interaction in Two Communities". In Gumperz and Hymes (eds.), *The Ethnography of Communication*. (*American Anthropologist*, Vol. 66, no. 6, part 2, 1964), pp. 137-153.

Lambert, Wallace E. "A Social Psychology of Bilingualism", In John Macnamara (ed.), *Problems of Bilingualism*, (*The Journal of Social Issues* 23:2, April 1967), pp. 91-109.

Levine, Lewis and Harry J. Crockett, Jr. "Speech Variation in a Piedmont Community: Postvocalic r". *Sociological Inquiry*, 36:186-203, 1966.

Shuy, Roger. "Linguistic Correlates of Social Stratification in Detroit Speech". Final Report, Cooperative Research Project No. 6-1347. East Lansing: Michigan State University, 1967.

A number of general collections of papers in the area of sociolinguistics have appeared recently, which include reports of some of the above work:

Bright, W. (ed) *Sociolinguistics*, The Hague: Mouton, 1966.

Fishman, Joshua (ed.) *Readings in the Sociology of Language*. The Hague: Mouton, 1968.

Gumperz, John and Dell Hymes (eds.) *The Ethnography of Communication*. (*American Anthropologist*, Vol. 66, No. 6, Part 2, 1964)

Lieberson, Stanley (ed.). *Explorations in Sociolinguistics*. *Sociological Inquiry* Vol. 36, No. 2, Spring 1966. Reprinted as Publication 44, Indiana University Research Center in Anthropology, Folklore and Linguistics, (Bloomington, Ind., 1967).

Bernstein's approach to class differences is represented in a number of articles, and in a comprehensive review by Lawton.

Bernstein, Basil. "Social Class and Linguistic Development". In A. H. Halsey et al. (eds.) Education, Economy, and Society, (New York: Free Press, 1961).

-----. "Elaborated and Restricted Codes". In Gumperz and Hymes (eds.) The Ethnography of Communication. (American Anthropologist, Vol. 66, No. 6, part 2, 1964), pp. 55-69.

Lawton, Denis. Social Class, Language and Education. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968.

4. The educational implications of sociolinguistic study

Much of the data in this section are drawn from studies of non-standard Negro English in the following sources:

Labov, William. "Some Sources of Reading Problems for Negro Speakers of Non-Standard English." In A. Frazier (ed.), New Directions in Elementary English (Champaign, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English, 1967), pp. 140-167.

-----. "The Non-Standard Negro Vernacular: Some Practical Suggestions." In Position Papers from Language Education for the Disadvantaged. (Report No. 3 of the NDEA National Institute for Advanced Study in Teaching Disadvantaged Youth, June 1968), pp. 4-7.

-----., and Clarence Robins. "A Note on the Relation of Reading Failure to Peer-Group Status In Urban Ghettos". To appear in Teachers College Record, Vol. 70, No. 5, Feb, 1969.

William Labov, Paul Cohen and Clarence Robins. A Preliminary Study of the Structure of English Used by Negro and Puerto Rican Speakers in New York City. Final Report, Cooperative Research Project No. 3091, Office of Education, Washington, D. C., 1965. [ERIC ED 010 688].

-----., Paul Cohen, Clarence Robins and John Lewis. "A Study of the Non-Standard English of Negro and Puerto Rican Speakers in New York City." Final Report, Cooperative Research Project No. 3288. Volume I. Washington, D.C.: Office of Education, 1968.

The historical origins of non-standard Negro English, and its relation to the Creole languages of the Caribbean are presented by W. Stewart and others in a number of papers:

Bailey, Beryl. "Toward a new perspective in Negro English dialectology", American Speech 40:171-177, 1965.

Stewart, William. Non-Standard Speech and the Teaching of English. Washington, D. C.: Center for Applied Linguistics, 1964.

-----. "Continuity and Change in American Negro Dialects", Florida FL Reporter, Spring 1968.

-----. "Sociolinguistic Factors in the History of American Negro Dialects", The Florida FL Reporter, Spring 1967.

For some papers which rely upon the notion of "cultural deprivation" and "verbal deprivation" see Fred M. Hechinger (ed.) Pre-School Education Today, New York: Doubleday, 1966, including articles by Deutsch, Bereiter and their associates:

Deutsch, Martin. "Early Social Environment: Its Influence on School Adaption". pp. 13-25.

-----. "Facilitating Development in the Pre-School Child: Social and Psychological Perspectives". pp. 73-97.

Bereiter, Carl et al. "An Academically Oriented Pre-School for Culturally Deprived Children." pp. 105-137.